A Stranger in the Mirror [187-142-066-096-3.5]

By: Sidney Sheldon

Category: Fiction Suspense

Synopsis:

Toby Temple is a superstar, the world's funniest man. He gets any woman that he wants, but under the superstar image is a lonely man. Jill Castle is a sensuous starlet.
She has a dark and mysterious past and has an ambition even greater than Toby's.
Together they rule Hollywood.

Last printing: 05/21/02
`;/91' ISBN: 0-2366-102-9772-1

Sidney Sheldon has had a most remarkable career. The New York Times acclaimed his novel. The Naked Face, as ' the best first mystery novel of the year '. At the age of twenty-four Mr Sheldon had three hit musicals playing simultaneously on Broadway. A theatrical motion picture, and television producer-writer-director, Mr Sheldon has been awarded an Oscar for his original screenplay of The Bachelor and the Bobby Soxer, Screen Writers Guild Awards for Annie Get Tour Gun and Easter Parade and a Tony for Broadway show Redhead.
He lives in Los Angeles with his wife, actress Jorja Curtright, and their daughter Mary.

Books by Sidney Shelton

A STRANGER W THE MIRROR
THB OTHBK SIDE OF MIDNIGHT
THH NAKED FACE

A STRANGER IN THE MIRROR
by Sidney Sheldon

First published 1976 by Hodder and Stoughton Ltd

First Indian edition published 1976 by
the macmillan company of india ltd
under arrangement with
Pan Books Ltd, Cavaye Place,
London SW10 9PG

Reprinted 1981

Printed by
T K Sengupte at Macmillan India Prcu, Madrai 600002.

note TO THE reader

The art of making others laugh is surely a wondrous gift from the gods. I affectionately dedicate this book to the comedians, the men and women who have that gift and share it with us. And to one of them in particular: my daughter's godfather, Groucho.

This is a work of fiction. Except for the names of theatrical personalities, all characters are imaginary.

If you would seek to find yourself
Look not in a mirror
For there is but a shadow there,
A stranger...
—silenius, Odes to Truth

PROLOGUE.

On a Saturday morning in early August in 1969, a series of bizarre and inexplicable events occurred aboard the fifty-five-thousand-ton luxury liner S.S. Bretagne as it was preparing to sail from the Port of New York to Le Havre.

Claude Dessard, chief purser of the Bretagne, a capable and meticulous man, ran, as he was fond of saying, a "tight ship". In the -fifteen years Dessard had served aboard the Bretagne, he had never encountered a situation he had not been able to deal with efficiently and discreetly. Considering that the S.S. Bretagne was a French ship, this was high tribute, indeed. However, on this particular summer day it was as though a thousand devils were conspiring against him. It was of small consolation to his sensitive Gallic pride that the intensive investigations conducted afterwards by the American and French branches of Interpol and the steamship line's own security forces failed to turn up a single plausible explanation for the extraordinary happenings of that day.

Because of the fame of the persons involved, the story was told in headlines all over the world, but the mystery remained unsolved.

As for Claude Dessard, he retired from the Qe. Transatlantique and opened a bistro in Nice, where he never tired of reliving with his patrons that strange, unforgettable August day.

It had begun, Dessard recalled, with the delivery of
flowers from the President of the United States.

One hour before sailing time, an official black limousine
bearing government license plates had driven up to Pier 92 on
the lower Hudson River. A man wearing a charcoal-gray suit
had disembarked from the car, carrying a bouquet of thirty-six
Sterling Silver roses. He had made his way to the foot of
the gangplank and exchanged a few words with Alain Safford,
the Bretagne's officer on duty. The flowers were ceremoniously
transferred to Janin, a junior deck officer, who delivered them
and then sought out Claude Dessard.
"I thought you might wish to know," Janin reported.
"Roses from the President to Mme. Temple."
fill Temple. In the last year, her photograph had appeared
on the front pages of daily newspapers and on magazine
covers from New York to Bangkok and Paris to Leningrad.
Claude Dessard recalled reading that she had been number
one in a recent poll of the world's most admired women, and
that a large number of newborn girls were being christened
Jill. The United States of America had always had its heroines.
Now, Jill Temple had become one. Her courage and the fantastic
battle she had won and then so ironically lost had captured
the imagination of the world. It was a great love story,
but it was much more than that: it contained all the elements
of classic Greek drama and tragedy.
Claude Dessard was not fond of Americans, but in this
case he was delighted to make an exception. He had tremendous
admiration for Mme. Toby Temple. She was -- and
this was the highest accolade Dessard could tender -- galante.
He resolved to see to it that her voyage on his ship would be
a memorable one.
The chief purser turned his thoughts away from Jill
Temple and concentrated on a final check of the passenger
list. There was the usual collection of what the Americans
referred to as VIP's, an acronym Dessard detested, particularly
since Americans had such barbaric ideas about what
made a person important. He noted that the wife of a wealthy
industrialist was traveling alone. Dessard smiled knowingly
.and scanned Ae passenger list for the name of Matt Ellis,
a black football star. When he found it, he nodded to himself,
satisfied. Dessard was also interested to note that in adjoining

cabins were a prominent senator and Carlina Rocca, a South
American stripper, whose names had been linked in recent
news stories. His eyes moved down the list.
David Kenyon. Money. An enormous amount of it. He
had sailed on the Bretagne before. Dessard remembered David
Kenyon as a good-looking, deeply tanned man with a lean,
athletic body. A quiet, impressive man. Dessard put a C.T.,
for captain's table, after David Kenyon's name.

Clifton Lawrence. A last-minute booking. A small frown
appeared on the chief purser's face. Ah, here was a delicate
problem. What did one do with Monsieur Lawrence? At one
time the question would not even have been raised, for he
would automatically have been seated at the captain's table,
where he would have regaled everyone with amusing anecdotes.
Clifton Lawrence was a theatrical agent who in his day had
represented many of the major stars in the entertainment
business. But, alas, M. Lawrence's day was over. Where once
the agent had always insisted on the luxurious Princess Suite,
oo this voyage he had booked a single room on a lower deck.
'First class, of course, but still... Claude Dessard decided he
would reserve his decision until he had gone through the other
names.
There was minor royalty aboard, a famous opera singer
and a Nobel Prize-declining Russian novelist.
A knock at the door interrupted Dessard's concentration.
Antoine, one of the porters, entered.
"Yes -- what?" Claude Dessard asked.
Antoine regarded him with rheumy eyes. "Did you order
die theater locked?"
Dessard frowned. "What are you talking about?"
"I assumed it was you. Who else would do it? A few
minutes ago I checked to see that everything was in order.
The doors were locked. It sounded like someone was inside
the theater, running a movie."
"We never run films in port," Dessard said firmly. "And
at no rime are those doors locked. I'll look into it."
Ordinarily, Claude Dessard would have investigated the
report immediately, but now he was harassed by dozens of
urgent last-minute details that had to be attended to before

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the twelve o'clock sailing. His supply of American dollars did
not tally, one of the best suites bad been booked twice by
mistake, and the wedding gift ordered by Captain Montaigne
had been delivered to the wrong ship. The captain was going
to be furious. Dessard stopped to listen to the familiar sound
of the ship's four powerful turbines starting. He felt the movement
of the S.S. Bretagne as she slipped away from the pier
and began backing her way into the channel. Then Dessard
once again became engrossed in his problems.
Half an hour later, Leon, the chief veranda-deck steward,
came in. Dessard looked up, impatiently. "Yes, Leon?"
"I'm sorry to bother you, but I thought you should
know..."
"Hm?" Dessard was only half-listening, his mind on the
delicate task of completing the seating arrangements for the
captain's table for each night of the voyage. The captain
was not a man gifted with social graces, and having dinner
with his passengers every night was an ordeal for him. It,
was Dessard's task to see that the group was agredble.

"It's about Mme. Temple ..." Leon began.
Dessard instantly laid down his pencil and looked up, his small black eyes alert. "Yes?"
"I passed her cabin a few minutes ago, and I heard loud voices and a scream. It was difficult to hear clearly through the door, but it sounded as though she was saying, 'You've killed me, you've killed me.' I thought it best not to interfere, so I came to tell you."
Dessard nodded. "You did well. I shall check to make certain that she is all right."
Dessard watched the deck steward leave. It was unthinkable that anyone would harm a woman like Mme. Temple. It was an outrage to Dessard's Gallic sense of chivalry. He put on his uniform cap, stole a quick look in the wall mirror and started for the door. The telephone rang. The chief purser hesitated, then picked it up. "Dessard."
"Claude --" It was the third mate's voice. "For Christ's sake, send someone down to the theater with a mop, would you? There's blood all over the place."
Dessard felt a sudden sinking sensation in the pit of his

stomach. "Right away," Dessard promised. He hung up, arranged for a porter, then dialed the ship's physician.
"Andre? Claude." He tried to make his voice casual. "I was just wondering whether anyone has been in for medical treatment.... No, no. I wasn't thinking of seasick pills. This person would be bleeding, perhaps badly.... I see. Thank you." Dessard hung up, filled with a growing sense of unease.
He left his office and headed for Jill Temple's suite. He was halfway there when the next singular event occurred. As Dessard reached the boat deck, he felt the rhythm of the ship's motion change. He glanced out at the ocean and saw that they had arrived at the Ambrose Lightship, where they would drop their pilot tug and the liner would head for the open sea. But instead, the Bretagne was slowing to a stop. Something out of the ordinary was happening.
Dessard hurried to the railing and looked over the side.
In the sea below, the pilot tug had been snugged against the cargo hatch of the Bretagne, and two sailors were transferring luggage from the liner to the tug. As Dessard watched, a passenger stepped from the ship's hatch onto the small boat.
Dessard could only catch a glimpse of the person's back, but he was sure that he must have been mistaken in his identification.
It was simply not possible. In fact, the incident of a passenger leaving the ship in this fashion was so extraordinary that the chief purser felt a small frisson of alarm. He turned and hurriedly made his way to Jill Temple's suite. There was no response to his knock. He knocked again, this time a little more loudly. "Madame Temple... This is Claude Dessard, the chief purser. I was wondering if I might be of any service."
There was no answer. By now, Dessard's internal warning

system was screaming. His instincts told him that there was something terribly wrong, and he had a premonition that it centered, somehow, around this woman. A series of wild, outrageous thoughts danced through his brain. She had been murdered or kidnapped or -- He tried the handle of the door. It was unlocked. Slowly, Dessard pushed the door open. Jill Temple was standing at the far end of the cabin, looking out the porthole, her back to him. Dessard opened his mouth to speak, but something in the frozen rigidity of her figure

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stopped him. He stood there awkwardly for a moment, debating whether to quietly withdraw, when suddenly the cabin was filled with an unearthly, keening sound, like an animal in pain. Helpless before such a deep private agony, Dessard withdrew, carefully closing the door behind him.

Dessard stood outside the cabin a moment, listening to the wordless cries from within. Then, deeply shaken, he turned and headed for the ship's theater on the main deck. A porter was mopping up a trail of blood in front of the theater.

Mon Dieu, Dessard thought. What next? He tried the door to the theater. It was unlocked. Dessard entered the large, modem auditorium that could seat six hundred passengers. The auditorium was empty. On an impulse, he went to the projection booth. The door was locked. Only two people had keys to this door, he and the projectionist. Dessard opened it with his key and went inside. Everything seemed normal. He walked over to the two Century 35-mm. projectors in the room and put his hands on them.

One of them was warm.

In the crew's quarters on D deck, Dessard found the projectionist, who assured him that he knew nothing about the theater being used.

On the way back to his office, Dessard took a shortcut through the kitchen. The chef stopped him, in a fury. "Look at this," he commanded Dessard. "Just look what some idiot has done!"

On a marble pastry table was a beautiful, six-tiered wedding cake, with delicate, spun-sugar figures of a bride and groom on top.

Someone had crushed in the head of the bride.

"It was at that moment," Dessard would tell the spellbound patrons at his bistro, "that I knew something terrible was about to happen."

BOOK ONE

In 1919, Detroit, Michigan, was the single most successful industrial city in the world. World War I had ended, and Detroit had played a significant part in the Allies' victory, supplying them with tanks and trucks and aeroplanes. Now, with the threat of the Hun over, the automobile plants once

again turned their energies to retooling for motorcars. Soon, four thousand automobiles a day were being manufactured, assembled and shipped. Skilled and unskilled labor came from all parts of the world to seek jobs in the automotive industry. Italians, Irish, Germans -- they came in a flood tide.
Among the new arrivals wete Paul Templarhaus and his I- bride, Frieda. Paul had been a butcher's apprentice in Munich. With the dowry he received when he married Frieda, he emigrated to New York and opened a butcher shop, which quickly showed a deficit. He then moved to St. Louis, Boston and, finally, Detroit, failing spectacularly in each city. In an era when business was booming and an increasing affluence meant a growing demand for meat, Paul Templarhaus managed to lose money everywhere he opened a shop. He was a good butcher but a hopelessly incompetent businessman. In truth he was more interested in writing poetry than in making money. He would spend hours dreaming up rhymes and poetic images. He would set them down on paper and mail them off to newspapers and magazines, but they never bought any of his masterpieces. To Paul, money was unimportant. He extended credit to everyone, and the word quickly spread: if

you had no money and wanted the finest of meats, go to Paul Templarhaus.
Paul's wife, Frieda, was a plain-looking girl who had had no experience with men before Paul had come along and proposed to her--or, rather, as was proper--to her father.
Frieda had pleaded with her father to accept Paul's suit, but the old man had needed no urging, for he had been desperately afraid he was going to be stuck with Frieda the rest of his life. He had even increased the dowry so that Frieda and her husband would be able to leave Germany and go to the New World.
Frieda had fallen shyly in love with her husband at first sight. She had never seen a poet before. Paul was thin and intellectual-looking, with pale myopic eyes and receding hair, and it was months before Frieda could believe that this handsome young man truly belonged to her. She had no illusions about her own looks. Her figure was lumpy, the shape of an oversized, uncooked potato kugel. Her best feature was her vivid blue eyes, the color of gentians, but the rest af her face seemed to belong to other people. Her nose was her grandfather's, large and bulbous, her forehead was an uncle's, high and sloping, and her chin was her father's, square and grim. Somewhere inside Frieda was a beautiful young girl, trapped with a face and body that God had given her as some kind of cosmic joke. But people could see only the formidable exterior. Except for Paul. Her Paul. It was just as well that Frieda never knew that her attraction lay in her dowry, which Paul saw as an escape from the bloody sides Of beef and hog brains. Paul's dream had been to go into* business for himself and make

enough money so that he could devote himself to his beloved
poetry.
Frieda and Paul went to an inn outside Salzburg for their
honeymoon, a beautiful old castle on a lovely lake, surrounded
by meadows and woods. Frieda had gone over the honeymoonnight
scene a hundred times in her mind. Paul would lock the
door and take her into his arms and murmur sweet endearments
as he began to undress her. His lips would find hers
and then slowly move down her naked body, the way they did
it in all the little green books she had secretly read. His organ

would be hard and erect and proud, like a German banner,
and Paul would carry her to the bed (perhaps it would be
safer if he walked her to it) and tenderly lay her down. Mem
Gott, Frieda, he would say. I love your body. You are not like
those skinny little girls. You have the body of a woman.
The actuality came as a shock. It was true that when they
reached their room, Paul locked the door. After that, the
reality was a stranger to the dream. As Frieda-watched, Paul
quickly stripped off his shirt, revealing a high, thin, hairless
chest. Then he pulled down his pants. Between his legs lay a
limp, tiny penis, hidden by a foreskin. It did not resemble
in any way the exciting pictures Frieda had seen. Paul stretched
out on the bed, waiting for her, and Frieda realized that he
expected her to undress herself. Slowly, she began to take off
her clothes. Well, size is not everything, Frieda thought. Paul
will be a wonderful lover. Moments later, the trembling bride
joined her groom on the marital bed. While she was waiting
for him to say something romantic, Paul rolled over on top of
her, made a few thrusts inside her, and rolled off again. For
the stunned bride, it was finished before it began. As for Paul,
his few previous sexual experiences had been with the whores
of Munich, and he was reaching for his wallet when he remembered
that he no longer had to pay for it. From now on it was
free. Long after Paul had fallen asleep, Frieda lay in bed,
trying not to think about her disappointment. Sex is not every she told
herself. My Paul will make a wonderful
husband.
As it turned out, she was wrong again.

It was shortly after the honeymoon that Frieda began
to see Paul in a more realistic light. Frieda had been reared
in the German tradition of a Hausfrau, and so she obeyed her
husband without question, but she was far from stupid. Paul
had no interest in life except his poems, and Frieda began to
realize that they were very bad. She could not help but observe
that Paul left a great deal to be desired in almost every
area she could think of. Where Paul was indecisive, Frieda
was firm, where Paul was stupid about business, Frieda was

clever. In the beginning, she had sat by, silently suffering,

while the head of the family threw away her handsome dowry
by his softhearted idiocies. By the time they moved to Detroit,
Frieda could stand it no longer. She marched into her husband's
butcher shop one day and took over the cash register.
The first thing she did was to put up a sign: No credit. Her
husband was appalled, but that was only the beginning. Frieda
raised the prices of meat and began advertising, showering
the neighbourhood with pamphlets, and the business expanded
overnight. From that moment on, it was Frieda who made all
the important decisions, and Paul who followed them. Frieda's
disappointment had turned her into a tyrant. She found that
she had a talent for running things and people, and she was
inflexible. It was Frieda who decided how their money was to
be invested, where they would live, where they would vacation,
and when it was time to have a baby.
She announced her decision to Paul one evening and put
him to work on the project until the poor man almost suffered
a nervous breakdown. He was afraid too much sex would
undermine his health, but Frieda was a woman of great determination.
"Put it in me," she would command.
"How can I?" Paul protested. "It is not interested."
Frieda would take his shriveled little penis and pull back
the foreskin, and when nothing happened, she would take it
in her mouth -- "Mein Gott, Frieda! What are you doingy --
until it got hard in spite of him, and she would insert it between
her legs until Paul's sperm was inside her.
Three months after they began, Frieda told her husband
that he could take a rest. She was pregnant. Paul wanted a
girl and Frieda wanted a boy, so it was no surprise to any of
their friends that the baby was a boy.
The baby, at Frieda's insistence, was delivered at home
by a midwife. Everything went smoothly up to and throughout
the actual delivery. It was then that those who were gathered
around the bed got a shock. The newborn infant was normal
in every way, except for its penis. The baby's orgjan was
enormous, dangling like a swollen, outsized appendage between
the baby's innocent thighs.

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His father's not built like that, Frieda thought with fierce
pride.

She named him Tobias, after an alderman who lived in
their precinct. Paul told Frieda that he would take over the
training of the boy. After all, it was the father's place to bring
up his son.
Frieda listened and smiled, and seldom let Paul go near
the child. It was Frieda who brought the boy up. She ruled
him with a Teutonic fist, and she did not bother with the
velvet glove. At five, Toby was a thin, spindly-legged child,
with a wistful face and the bright, gentian-blue eyes of his
mother. Toby adored his mother and hungered for her approval.

He wanted her to pick him up and hold him on her
big, soft lap so that he could press his head deep into her
bosom. But Frieda had no time for such things. She was busy
making a living for her family. She loved little Toby, and
she was determined that he would not grow up to be a weakling
like his father. Frieda demanded perfection in everything
Toby did. When he began school, she would supervise his
homework, and if he was puzzled by some assignment, his
mother would admonish him, "Come on, boy -- roll up your
sleeves!" And she would stand over him until he had solved
the problem. The sterner Frieda was with Toby, the more he
loved her. He trembled at the thought of displeasing her. Her
punishment was swift and her praise was slow, but she felt
that it was for Toby's own good. From the first moment her
son had been placed in her arms, Frieda had known that one
day he was going to become a famous and important man.
She did not know how or when, but she knew it would happen.
It was as though God had whispered it into her ear. Before
her son was even old enough to understand what she was
saying, Frieda would tell him of his greatness to come, and
she never stopped telling him. And so, young Toby grew up
knowing that he was going to be famous, but having no idea
how or why. He only knew that his mother was never wrong.

Some of Toby's happiest moments occurred when he sat
in the enormous kitchen doing his homework while his mother

stood at the large old-fashioned stove and cooked. She would
make heavenly smelling, thick black bean soup with whole
frankfurters floating in it, and platters of succulent bratwurst,
and potato pancakes with fluffy edges of brown lace. Or she
would stand at the large chopping block in the middle of the
kitchen, kneading dough with her thick, strong hands, then
sprinkling a light snowflake of flour over it, magically transforming
the dough into a mouth-watering Pflaumenkuchen or
Apfelkuchen. Toby would go to her and throw his arms around
her large body, his face reaching only up to her waist. The
exciting female smell of her would become a part of all the
exciting kitchen smells, and an unbidden sexuality would stir
within him. At those moments Toby would gladly have died
for her. For the rest of his life, the smell of fresh apples cooking
in butter brought back an instant, vivid image of his
mother.

One afternoon, when Toby was twelve years old, Mrs.
Durkin, the neighbourhood gossip, came to visit them. Mr.
Durkin was a bony-faced woman with black, darting eyes
and a tongue that was never still. When she departed, Toby
did an imitation of her that had his mother roaring with
laughter. It seemed to Toby that it was the first time he had
ever heard her laugh. From that moment on, Toby looked
for ways to entertain her. He would do devastating imitations

of customers who came into the butcher shop and of teachers and schoolmates, and his mother would go into gales of laughter.
Toby had finally discovered a way to win his mother's approval.
He tried out for a school play. No Account David, and was given the lead. On opening night, his mother sat in the front row and applauded her son's success. It was at that moment that Frieda knew how God's promise was going to come true.
It was the early 1930s, the beginning of the Depression, and movie theaters all over the country were trying every conceivable stratagem to ml their empty seats. They gave away dishes and radios, and had keno nights and bingo nights, and

hired organists to accompany the boundng ball while the audience sang along.
And they held amateur contests. Frieda would carefully check the theatrical section of the newspaper to see where contests were taking place. Then she would take Toby there and sit in the audience while he did his imitations of Al Jolson and James Cagney and Eddie Cantor and yell out, "Mein Himmel! What a talented boy!" Toby nearly always won first prize.
He had grown taller, but he was still thin, an earnest child with guileless, bright blue eyes set in the face of a cherub. One looked at him and instantly thought: innocence. When people saw Toby they wanted to put their arms around him and hug him and protect him from Life. They loved him and on stage they applauded him. For the first time Toby understood what he was destined to be; he was going to be a tar, for his mother first, and God second.

Toby's libido began to stir when he was fifteen. He would masturbate in the bathroom, the one place he was assured of privacy, but that was not enough. He decided he needed a girl. One evening, Clara Connors, the married sister of a classmate, drove Toby home from an errand he was doing for his mother. Clara was a pretty blonde with large breasts, and as Toby sat next to her, he began to get an erection. Nervously, he inched his hand across to her lap and began to fumble under her skirt, ready to withdraw instantly if she screamed. Clara was more amused than angry, but when Toby pulled out his penis and she saw the size of it, she invited him to her house the following afternoon and initiated Toby into the joys of sexual intercourse. It was a fantastic experience. Instead of a soapy hand, Toby had found a soft, warm receptacle that throbbed and grabbed at his penis. Clara's moans and screams made him grow hard again and again, so that he had orgasm after orgasm without ever leaving the warm, wet nest. The size of his penis had always been a-source of secret shame to Toby.

Now it had suddenly become his glory. Clara could not keep this phenomenon to herself, and soon Toby found himself servicing half a dozen married women in the neighborhood.

During the next two years, Toby managed to deflower nearly half the girls in his class. Some of Toby's classmates were football heroes, or better looking than he, or rich -- but where they failed, Toby succeeded. He was the funniest, cutest thing the girls had ever seen, and it was impossible to say no to that innocent face and those wistful blue eyes.

In Toby's senior year in high school, when he was eighteen, he was summoned to the principal's office. In the room were Toby's mother, grim-faced, a sobbing sixteen-yearold Catholic girl named Eileen Henegan and her father, a uniformed police sergeant. The moment Toby entered the room, he knew he was in deep trouble.

"I'll come right to the point, Toby," the principal said. "Eileen is pregnant. She says you're the father of her child. Have you had a physical relationship with her?"

Toby's mouth suddenly went dry. All he could think of was how much Eileen had enjoyed it, how she had moaned and begged for more. And now this.

"Answer him, you little son of a bitch!" Eileen's father bellowed. "Did you touch my daughter?"

Toby sneaked a look at his mother. That she was here to witness his shame upset him more than anything else. He had let her down, disgraced her. She would be repelled by his behavior. Toby resolved that if he ever got out of this, if God would only help him this once and perform some kind of miracle, he would never touch another girl as long as he lived. He would go straight to a doctor and have himself castrated, so that he would never even think about sex again, and...

"Toby..." His mother was speaking, her voice stem and cold. "Did you go to bed with this girl?"

Toby swallowed, took a deep breath and mumbled, "Yes, Mother."

"Then you will marry her." There was finality in her tone. She looked at the sobbing, puffy-eyed girl. "Is that what you want?"

"Y-yes," Eileen cried. "I love Toby." She turned to Toby. "They made me tell. I didn't want to give them your name."

Her father, the police sergeant, announced to the room at

large, "My daughter's only sixteen. It's statutory rape. He could be sent to jail for the rest of his miserable life. But if he's going to marry her..."

They all turned to look at Toby. He swallowed again and said, "Yes, sir. I -- I'm sorry it happened."

During the silent ride home with his mother, Toby sat
at her side, miserable, knowing how much he had hurt her.
Now he would have to find a job to support Eileen and the
child. He would probably have to go to work in the butcher
shop and forget his dreams, all his plans for the future. When
they reached the house, his mother said to him, "Come upstairs."
Toby followed her to his room, steeling himself for a
lecture. As he watched, she took out a suitcase and began
packing his clothes. Toby stared at her, puzzled. "What are
you doing. Mama?"
"Me? I'm not doing anything. You are. You're going away
from here."
She stopped and turned to face him. "Did you think I
was going to let you throw your life away on that nothing of
a girl? So you took her to bed and she's going to have a baby.
That proves two things -- that you're human, and she's stupid!
Oh, no -- no one traps my son into marriage. God meant you
to be a big man, Toby. You'll go to New York, and when
you're a famous star, you'll send for me."
He blinked back tears and new into her arms, and she
cradled him in her enormous bosom. Toby suddenly felt lost
and frightened at the thought of leaving her. And yet, there
was an excitement within him, the exhilaration of embarking
on a new life. He was going to be in Show Business. He was
going to be a star; he was going to be famous.
His mother had said so.

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In i939» New York City was a mecca for the theater.
The Depression was over. President Franklin Roosevelt had
promised that there was nothing to fear but fear itself, that
America would be the most prosperous nadon on earth, and
so it was. Everyone had money to spend. There were thirty
shows playing on Broadway, and all of them seemed to be hits.
Toby arrived in New York with a hundred dollars his
mother had given him. Toby knew he was going to be rich
and famous. He would send for his mother and they would
live in a beautiful penthouse and she would come to the theater
every night to watch the audience applaud him. In the meanme,
he had to find a job. He went to the stage doors of all the
Broadway theaters and told them about the amateur contests
he had won and how talented he was. They threw him out.
During the weeks that Toby hunted for a job, he sneaked into
theaters and nightclubs and watched the top performers work,
particularly the comedians. He saw Ben Blue and Joe E. Lewis
and Frank Fay. Toby knew that one day he would be better
than all of them.
His money running out, lie took a job as a dishwasher.
He telephoned his mother every Sunday morning, when the
rates were cheaper. She told Toby about the furor caused by
his running away.

"You should see them," his mother said. "The policeman comes over here in his squad car every night. The way he carries on, you would think we were all gangsters. He keeps asking where you are."

"What do you tell him?" Toby asked anxiously.
"The truth. That you slunk away like a thief in the night, and that if I ever got my hands on you I would personally wring your neck."
Toby laughed aloud.

During the summer, Toby managed to get a job as an assistant to a magician, a beady-eyed, untalented mountebank who performed under the name of the Great Merlin. They played a series of second-rate hotels in the Catskills, and Toby's primary job was to haul the heavy paraphernalia in and out of Merlin's station wagon, and to guard the props, which consisted of six white rabbits, three canaries and two hamsters. Because of Merlin's fears that the props would "get eaten", Toby was forced to live with them in rooms the size of broom closets, and it seemed to Toby that the whole summer consisted of one overpowering stench. He was in a state of physical exhaustion from carrying the heavy cabinets with trick sides and bottoms and running after props that were constantly escaping. He was lonely and disappointed. He sat staring at the dingy, little rooms, wondering what he was doing here and how this was going to get him started in show business. He practiced his imitations in front of the mirror, and his audience consisted of Merlin's smelly little animals.

One Sunday as the summer was drawing to a dose, Toby made his weekly telephone call home. This time it was his father who answered.
"It's Toby, Pop. How are you?"
There was a silence.
"Hello! Are you there?"
"I'm here, Toby." Something in his father's voice chilled Toby.
"Where's Mom?"
"They took her to the hospital last night."
Toby clutched the receiver so hard that it almost broke in his fist. "What happened to her?"
"The doctor said it was a heart attack."
Nol Not his motheri "She's going to be all right," Toby

demanded. "Isn't she?" He was screaming into the mouthpiece. "Tell me she's going to be all right, goddam you!"
From a million miles away he could hear his father crying.
"She -- she died a few hours ago, son."

The words washed over Toby like white-hot lava, burning
him, scalding him, until his body felt as though it were
on fire. His father was lying. She couldn't be dead. They had
a pact. Toby was going to be famous and his mother was
going to be at his side. There was a beautiful penthouse waiting
for her, and a limousine and chauffeur and furs and
diamonds... He was sobbing so hard he could not breathe.
He heard the distant voice saying, "Toby! Toby!"
"I'm on my way home. When is the funeral?"
"Tomorrow," his father said. "But you mustn't come
here. They'll be expecting you, Toby. Eileen is going to have
her baby soon. Her father wants to kill you. They'll be looking
for you at the funeral."
So he could not even say good-bye to the only person
in the world he loved. Toby lay in his bed all that day, remembering.
The images of his mother were so vivid and alive. She
was in the kitchen, cooking, telling him what an important
man he was going to be, and at the theater, sitting in the front
row and calling out, "Mein Himmel! What a talented boy I"
And laughing at his imitations and jokes. And packing his
suitcase. When you're a famous star, you'll send for me. He
lay there, numbed with grief, thinking, Fll never forget this
day. Not as long as I live. August the fourteenth, l<)39- This
is the most important day of my life.
He was right. Not because of the death of his mother
but because of an event that was taking place in Odessa,
Texas, fifteen hundred miles away.

* * *

The hospital was an anonymous four-storey building, the
color of charity. Inside was a rabbit warren of cubicles designed
to diagnose sickness, alleviate it, cure it or sometimes bury it.
It was a medical supermarket, and there was something there
for everyone.
It was four a.m., the hour of quiet death or fitful sleep.

A time for the hospital staff to have a respite before girding
for the battles of another day.
The obstetrical team in Operating Room 4 was in trouble.
What had started out as a routine delivery had suddenly
turned into an emergency. Up until the actual delivery of the
baby of Mrs. Karl Czinski, everything had been normal. Mrs.
Czinski was a healthy woman in her prime, with wide peasant
hips that were an obstetrician's dream. Accelerated contractions
had begun, and things were moving along according to
schedule.
"Breech delivery," Dr. Wilson, the obstetrician, announced.
The words caused no alarm. Although only three
percent of births are breech deliveries -- the lower part of
the infant emerging first -- they are usually handled with ease.

There, are three types of breech deliveries: spontaneous, where no help is required; assisted, where the obstetrician lends nature a hand; and a complete "breakup", where the baby i? wedged in the mother's womb.
Dr. Wilson noted with satisfaction that this was going to be a spontaneous delivery, the simplest kind. He watched the baby's feet emerge, followed by two small legs. There was another contraction from the mother, and the baby's thighs appeared.
"We're almost there," Dr. Wilson said encouragingly. "Bear down once more."
Mrs. Czinski did. Nothing happened.
He frowned. "Try again. Harder."
Nothing.
Dr. Wilson placed his hands on the baby's legs and tugged, very gently. There was no movement. He squeezed his hand past the baby, through the narrow passage into the uterus, and began to explore. Beads of perspiration suddenly appeared on his forehead. The maternity nurse moved close to him and mopped his brow.
"We've got a problem," Dr. Wilson said, in a low voice.
Mrs. Czinski heard. "What's wrong?" she asked.
"Everything's fine." Dr. Wilson reached in farther, gently trying to push the infant downward. It would not budge. He could feel the umbilical cord compressed between the baby's

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body and the maternal pelvis, cutting off the baby's air supply.
"Fetoscopel"
The maternity nurse reached for the instrument and applied it to the mother's belly, listening for the baby's heartbeat.
"It's down to thirty," she reported. "And there's marked arrhythmia."
Dr. Wilson's fingers were inside the mother's body, like remote antennae of his brain, probing, searching.
"I'm losing the fetal heartbeat --" There was alarm in the maternity nurse's voice. "It's negative!"
They had a dying baby inside the womb. There was still a slim chance that the baby could be revived if they could get it out in time. They had a maximum of four minutes to deliver it, dear its lungs and get its tiny heart beating again. After four minutes, brain damage would be massive and irreversible.
"Clock it," Dr. Wilson ordered.
Everyone in the room instinctively glanced up as the electric clock on the wall clicked to the twelve o'clock position, and the large red second hand began making its first sweep.
The delivery team went to work. An emergency respiratory tank was wheeled to the table while Dr. Wilson tried to dislodge the infant from the pelvic floor. He began the Bracht maneuver, trying to shift the infant around, twisting its

shoulders so that it could clear the vaginal opening. It was useless.
A student nurse, participating in her first delivery, felt suddenly ill. She hurried out of the room.
Outside the door of the operating room stood Karl Czinski, nervously kneading his hat in his large, calloused hands. This was the happiest day of his life. He was a carpenter, a simple man who believed in early marriage and large families. This child would be their first, and it was all he could do to contain his excitement. He loved his wife very much, and he knew that without her he would be lost. He was thinking about his wife as the student nurse came rushing out of the delivery room, and he called to her, "How is she?"
The distraught young nurse, her mind preoccupied with

the baby, cried, "She's dead, she's deadi" and hurried away to be sick.
Mr. Czinski's face went white. He clutched his chest and began gasping for air. By the time they got him to the emergency ward, he was beyond help.
Inside the delivery room, Dr. Wilson was working francally, racing the clock. He could reach inside and touch the umbilical cord and feel the pressure against it, but there was no way to release it. Every impulse in him screamed for him to pull the half-delivered baby out by force, but he had seen what happened to babies that had been delivered that way.
Mrs. Czinski was moaning now, half delirious.
"Bear down, Mrs. Czinski. Harder! Come on!"
It was no use. Dr. Wilson glanced up at the clock. Two predous minutes were gone, without any blood circulating through the baby's brain. Dr. Wilson faced another problem: what was he going to do if the baby were saved after the four minutes had elapsed? Let it live and become a vegetable? Or let it have a merciful, quick death? He put the thought out of his mind and began to move faster. Closing his eyes, working by touch, all his concentration focused on what was happening inside the woman's body. He tried the MauriceauSmellieVeit maneuver, a complicated series of moves designed to loosen and free the baby's body. And suddenly there was a shift. He felt it begin to move. "Piper forceps!"
The maternity nurse swiftly handed him the special forceps and Dr. Wilson reached in and placed them around the baby's head. A moment later the head emerged.
The baby was delivered.
This was always the instant of glory, the miracle of a newly created life, red-faced and bawling, complaining of the indignity of being forced out of that quiet, dark womb into the light and the cold.
But not this baby. This baby was blue-white and still.
It was a female.
The dock. A minute and a half left. Every move was swiftly mechanical now, the result of long years of practice.

Gauzed fingers cleared the back of the infant's pharynx so air
could get into the laryngcal opening. Dr. Wilson placed the

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baby flat on its back. The maternity nurse handed him a smallsize
laryngoscope connecting with an electric suction apparatus.
He set it in place and nodded, and the nurse clicked a switch.
The rhythmic sucking sound of the machine began.
Dr. Wilson looked up at the dock.
Twenty seconds left to go. Heartbeat negative.
Fifteen ... fourteen... Heartbeat negative.
The moment of decision was at hand. It might already be
too late to prevent brain damage. No one could ever be really
sure about these things. He had seen hospital wards filled with
pathetic creatures with the bodies of adults and the minds of
children, or worse.
Ten seconds. And no pulse, not even a thread to give
him hope.
Five seconds. He made his decision then, and hoped that
God would understand and forgive him. He was going to pull
the plug, say that the baby could not be saved. No one would
question his action. He felt the baby's skin once more. It was
cold and clammy.
Three seconds.
He looked down at the infant and he wanted to weep. It
was such a pity. She was a pretty baby. She would have grown
up to be a beautiful woman. He wondered what her life would
have been like. Would she have gotten married and had
children? Or perhaps become an artist or a teacher or a business
executive? Would she have been rich or poor? Happy or
unhappy?
One second. Negative heartbeat.
Zero.
He reached his hand toward the switch, and at that
instant the baby's heart began to beat. It was a tentative,
irregular spasm, and then another and then it steadied down
id a strong, regular beat. There was a spontaneous cheer in
the room and cries of congratulation. Dr. Wilson was not
listening.
He was staring up at the clock on the wall.
in Krakow. A middle name would have been pretentious for
the daughter of a Polish seamstress in Odessa, Texas.
For reasons that Airs. Czinski did not understand, Dr.
Wilson insisted that Josephine be brought back to the hospiral
for an examination every six weeks. The conclusions each time
were the same: she seemed normal.
Only time would tell.
3

On Labor Day, the summer season in the Catskills was
over and the Great Merlin was out of a job, and along with
him, Toby. Toby was free to go. But where? He was homeless,

jobless and penniless. Toby's decision was made for him
when a guest offered him twenty-five dollars to drive her and
her three young children from the Catskills to Chicago.
Toby left without saying good-bye to the Great Merlin
or his smelly props.

Chicago, in 1939, was a prosperous, wide-open city. It
was a city with a price, and those who knew their way around
could buy anything from women to dope to politicians. There
were hundreds of nightclubs that catered to every taste. Toby
made the rounds of all of them, from the big, brassy Chez
Paree to the little bars on Rush Street. The answer was always
the same. No one wanted to hire a young punk as a comic.
The sands were running out for Toby. It was time he started
to fulfill his mother's dream.
He was almost nineteen years old.

One of the clubs Toby hung around was the Knee High,
where the entertainment consisted of a dred three-piece combo,
a broken-down, middle-aged drunken comic and two strippers,
Meri and Jeri, who were billed as the Perry Sisters and were,
improbably enough, really sisters. They were in their twenties,
and attractive in a cheap, blowsy way. Jeri came up to the bar

one evening and sat next to Toby. He smiled and said politely,
"I like your act."
Jeri turned to look at him and saw a naive, baby-faced
kid, too young and too poorly dressed to be a mark. She nodded
indifferently and started to turn away, when Toby stood up.
Jeri stared at the telltale bulge in his pants, then turned to
look up at the innocent young face again. "Jesus Christ," she
said. "Is that all you?"
He smiled. "There's only one way to find out."
At three o'clock that morning, Toby was in bed with both
of the Perry Sisters.

Everything had been meticulously planned. One hour
before showtime, Jeri had taken the club comic, a compulsive
gambler, to an apartment on Diversey Avenue where a crap
game was in progress. When he saw the action, he licked his
lips and said, "We can stay only a minute."
Thirty minutes later, when Jeri slipped away, the comic
was rolling the dice. screaming like a maniac, "An eighter
from Decatur, you son of a bitch!" lost in some fantasy world
where success and stardom and riches all hung on each roll
of the dice.
At the Knee High, Toby sat at the bar, neat and tidy,
waiting.
When showtime came and the comic had not appeared,
the owner of the club began to rage and curse. "That bastard's
through this time, you hear? I won't have him near my club
again."
"I don't blame you," Meri said. "But you're in luck.

There's a new comic sitting at the bar. He just got in from
New York."
"What? Where?" The owner took one look at Toby.
"For chnssakes, where's his nanny? He's a baby'''
"He's great! " Jeri said. And she meanr it.
"Try him," Meri added. "What can you lose?"
"My fuckin' customers!" But he shru^d and walked
over to where Toby was sitting. "So you're a comic, huh?"
"Yeah," Toby said casually. "I just finished doing a gig
in the Catskills."

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The owner studied him a moment. "How old are you?''
"Twenty-two," Toby lied.
"Horseshit. All right. Get out there. And if you lay an
egg, you won't live to see twenty-two."
And there it was. Toby Temple's dream had finally come
true. He was standing in the spotlight while the band played
a fanfare for him, and the audience, his audience, sat there
waiting to discover him, to adore him. He felt a surge of
affection so strong that the feeling brought a lump to his
throat. It was as though he and the audience were one, bound
together by some wonderful, magical cord. For an instant he
thought of his mother and hoped that wherever she was, she
could see him now. The fanfare stopped. Toby went into his
routine.
"Good evening, you lucky people. My name is Toby
Temple. I guess you all know your names."
Silence.
He went on. "Did you hear about the new head of the
Mafia in Chicago? He's a queer. From now on, the Kiss of
Death includes dinner and dancing."
There was no laughter. They were staring at him, cold
and hostile, and Toby began to feel the sharp claws of fear
tearing at his stomach. His body was suddenly soaked in
perspiration. That wonderful bond with the audience had
vanished.
He kept going. "I just played an engagement in a theater
up in Maine. The theater was so far back in the woods that
the manager was a bear."
Silence. They hated him.
"Nobody told me this was a deaf-mute convention. I feel
like the social director on the Titanic. Being here is like walking
up the gangplank and there's no ship."
They began to boo. Two minutes after Toby had begun,
the owner frantically signaled to the musicians, who started to play loudly,
drowning out Toby's voice. He stood there,
a big smile on his face, his eyes stinging with tears.
He wanted to scream at them.

/(was the screams that awakened Mr". Csinski. They

were high-pitched and feral, eerie in the stillness of the night, and it was not until she sat up in bed that she realized it was the baby screaming. She hurried into the other room where she had fixed up a nursery. Josephine was rolling from side to side, her face blue from convulsions. At the hospital, an intern gave the baby an intravenous sedative, and she fell into a peaceful sleep. Dr. Wilsons who had delivered fosephine, gave her a thorough examination. He could find nothing wrong with her. But he was uneasy. He could not forget the clock on the wall.

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Vaudeville had flourished in America from 1881 until its final demise when the Palace Theatre closed its doors in 1932. Vaudeville had been the training ground for all the aspiring young co^iics, the battlefield where they sharpened their wits against hostile, jeering audiences. However, the comics who won out went on to fame and fortune. Eddie Cantor and W. C. Fields, Jolson and Benny, Abbott and Costello, and Jessel and Burns and the Marx Brothers, and dozens more. Vaudeville was a haven, a steady paycheck, but with vaudeville dead, comics had to turn to other fields. The big names were booked for radio shows and personal appearances, and they also played the important nightclubs around the country. For the struggling young comics like Toby, however, it was another story.
They played nightclubs, too, but it was a different world. It was called the Toilet Circuit, and the name was a euphemism. It consisted of dirty saloons all over the country where the great unwashed public gathered to guzzle beer and belch at the strippers and destroy the comics for sport. The dressing rooms were stinking toilets, smelling of stale food and spilled drinks and urine and cheap perfume and, overlaying it all, the rancid odor of fear: flop sweat. The toilets were so filthy that the female performers squatted over the dressing room sinks to urinate. Payment varied from an indigestible meal to five, ten or sometimes as much as fifteen dollars a night, depending on the audience reaction.
Toby Temple played them all, and they became his school. The names of the towns were different, but the places were all the same, and the smells were the same, and the hostile audiences were the same- If they did not like a performer, they threw beer bottles at him and heckled him throughout his performance and whistled him off. It was a tough school, but it was a good one, because it taught Toby all the tricks of survival. He learned to deal with drunken tourists and sober hoodlums, and never to confuse the two. He learned how to spot a potential heckler and quiet him by asking him for a sip of his drink or borrowing his napkin to mop his brow.
Toby talked himself into jobs at places with names like Lake Kiamesha and Shawanga Lodge and the Avon. He played

Wildwood, New Jersey, and the B'nai B'rith and the Sons of
Italy and Moose halls.
And he kept learnir T.
.Toby's act consisted of parodies of popular songs, imitations
of Gable and Grant and Bogart and Cagney, and material
stolen from the big-name comics who could afford expensive
writers. All the struggling comics stole their material, and they
bragged about it. "I'm doing Jerry Lester" -- meaning they
were using his material -- "and I'm twice as good as he is."
"I'm doing Milton Berle." "You should see my Red Skelton."
Because material was the key, they stole only from the
best.
Toby would try anything. He would fix the indifferent,
hard-faced audience with his wistful blue eyes and say, "Did
you ever see an Eskimo pee?" He would put his two hands
in front of his fly, and ice cubes would dribble out.
He would put on a turban and wrap himself in a sheet.
"Abdul, the snake charmer," he would intone. He would play
a flute, and out of a wicker basket a cobra began to appear,
moving rhythmically to the music as Toby pulled wires. The
snake's body was a douche bag, and its head was the nozzle,
There was always someone in the audience who thought it was
funny.
He did the standards and the stockies and the platters,
where you laid the jokes in their laps.
He had dozens of shticks. He had to be ready to switch
from one bit to another, before the beer bottles started flying.

And no matter where he played, there was always the
sound of a flushing toilet during his act.

Toby traveled across the country by bus. When he arrived
at a new town he would check into the cheapest hotel or
boardinghouse and size up the nightclubs and bars and horse
parlors. He stuffed cardboard in the soles of his shoes and
whitened his shirt collars with chalk to save on laundry. The
towns were all dreary, and the food was always bad- but it was
the loneliness that ate into him. He had no one. There was not
a single person in the vast universe who cared whether he lived
or died. He wrote to his father from time to time, but it was
out of a sense of duty rather than love. Toby desperately
needed someone to talk to, someone who would understand
him, share his dreams with him.
He watched the successful entertainers leave the big clubs
with their entourages and their beautiful, classy girls and drive
off in shiny limousines, and Toby envied them. Someday...
The worst moments were when he flopped, when he was
booed in the middle of his act, thrown out before he had a chance to get
started. At those times Toby hated the people
in the audience; he wanted to kill them. It wasn't only that
he had failed, it was that he had failed at the bottom. He

could go down no further; he was there. He hid in his hotel room and cried and begged God to leave him alone, to take away his desire to stand in front of an audience and entertain them. God, he prayed, let me want to be a shoe salesman or a butcher. Anything but this. His mother had been wrong. God had not singled him out. He was never going to be famous. Tomorrow, he would find some other line of work. He would apply for a nine-to-five job in an office and live like a normal human being.

And the next night Toby would be on stage again, doing his imitations, telling jokes, trying to win over the people before they turned on him and attacked.

He would smile at them innocently and say, "This man was in love with his duck, and he took it to a movie with him one night. The cashier said, 'You can't bring that duck in here', so the man went around the corner and stuffed the duck down the front of his trousers, bought a ticket and went inside. The duck started getting restless; so the man opened up his fly and let the duck's head out. Well, next to the man was a lady and her husband. She turned to her husband and said, 'Ralph, the man next to me has his penis out.' So Ralph said, 'Is he bothering you?' 'No,' she said. 'Okay. Then forget it and enjoy the movie.' A few minutes later the wife nudged her husband again. 'Ralph -- his penis--' And her husband said, 'I told you to ignore it.' And she said, 'I can't--it's eating my popcorn!' "

He made one-night appearances at the Three Six Five in San Francisco, Rudy's Rail in New York and Kin Wa Low's in Toledo. He played plumbers' conventions and bar mitzvahs and bowling banquets.

And he learned.

He did four and five shows a day at small theaters named the Gem and the Odeon and the Empire and the Star.

And he learned.

And, finally, one of the things that Toby Temple teamed was that he could spend the rest of his life playing the Toilet Circuit, unknown and undiscovered. But an event occurred that made the whole matter academic.

On a cold Sunday afternoon in early December in 1941, Toby was playing a five-a-day act at the Dewey Theatre on Fourteenth Street in New York. There were eight acts on the bill, and part of Toby's job was to introduce them. The first show went well. During the second show, when Toby introduced the Flying Kanazawas, a family of Japanese acrobats, the audience began to hiss them. Toby retreated backstage.

"What the hell's the matter with them out there?" he asked.

"Jesus, haven't you heard? The Japs attacked Pearl Harbor a few hours ago," the stage manager told him.

"So what?" Toby asked. "Look at those guys -- they're great."

The next show, when it was the turn of the Japanese

troupe, Toby went out on stage and said, "Ladies and gentlemen,
it's a great privilege to present to you. fresh from their

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triumph in Manila-- the Flying Filipinos!" The moment the
audience saw the Japanese troupe, they began to hiss. During
the rest of the day Toby turned them into the Happy
Hawaiians, the Mad Mongolians and, finally, the Eskimo
Flyers. But he was unable to save them. Nor, as it turned
out, himself. When he telephoned his father that evening,
Toby learned that there was a letter waiting for him at home.
It began, "Greetings", and was signed by the President. Six
weeks later, Toby was sworn into the United States Army.
The day he was inducted, his head was pounding so hard
that he was barely able to take tHe oath.

The headaches came often, and when they happened, little fosephine felt as
though two giant hands were squeezing
her temples. She tried not to cry, because it upset her
mother. Mrs. Czinski had discovered religion. She had always
secretly felt that in some way she and her baby were responsible
for the death of her husband. She had wandered into
a revival meeting one afternoon, and the minister had
thundered, "You are all soaked in sin and wickedness. The
God that holds you over the pit of Hell like a loathsome
insect over a fire abhors you. You hang by a slender thread,
every damned one of you, and the flames of His wrath will
consume you unless you repent!" Mrs. Csinski instantly felt
better, for she knew that she was hearing the word of the
Lord.
''/<'.? a punishment from God because we killed your
father," her mother would tell Josephine, and while she was
too young to understand what the words meant, she knew
that she had done something bad, and she wished she knew
what it was, so that she could tell her mother that she was
In the beginning, Toby Temple's war was a nightmare.
In the army. he was a nobody, a serial number in a
uniform like millions of others, faceless, nameless, anonymous.

He was sent to basic training camp in Georgia and then
shipped out to England, where his outfit was assigned to a
camp in Sussex. Toby told the sergeant he wanted to see
the commanding general. He got as far as a captain. The
captain's name was Sam Winters. He was p dark-complexioned,
intelligent-looking man in his early thirties. "What's
your problem, soldier?"
"It's like this. Captain," Toby began. "I'm an entertainer.
I'm in show business. That's what I did in civilian life."
Captain Winters smiled at his earnestness. "What
exaetly do you do?" he asked.
"A little of everything," Toby replied. "I do imitations
and parodies and.. ." He saw the look in the captain's eyes

and ended lamely, "Things like that."
"Where have you worked?"
Toby started to speak, then stopped. It was hopeless.
The captain would only be impressed by places like New
York and Hollywood. "No place you would have heard of,"
Toby replied. He knew now that he was wasting his time.
Captain Winters said, "It's not up to me, but I'll see
what I can do."
"Sure," Toby said. "Thanks a lot, Captain." He gave a
salute and exited.

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Captain Sam Winters sat at his desk, thinking about
Toby long after the boy had gone. Sam Winters had enlisted
because he felt that this was a war that had to be fought and
had to be won. At the same time he hated it for what it was
doing to young kids like Toby Temple. But if Temple really
had talent, it would come through sooner or later, for talent
was like a frail flower growing under solid rock. In the end,
nothing could stop it from bursting through and blooming.
Sam Winters had given up a good job as a motion-picture
producer in Hollywood to go into the army. He had produced
several successful pictures for Pan-Pacific Studios and had
seen dozens of young hopefuls like Toby Temple come and
go. The least they deserved was a chance. Later that afternoon
he spoke to Colonel Beech about Toby. "I think we should
let Special Services audition him," Captain Winters said. "I
have a feeling he might be good. God knows the boys are
going to need all the entertainment they can get."
Colonel Beech stared up at Captain Winters and said
coolly, "Right, Captain. Send me a memo on it." He watched
as Captain Winters walked out the door. Colonel Beech was
a professional soldier, a West Point man, and the son of a
West Point man. The Colonel despised all civilians, and to
him. Captain Winters was a civilian. Putting on a uniform
and captain's bars did not make a man a soldier. When
Colonel Beech received Captain Winters's memo on Toby
Temple, he glanced at it, then savagely scribbled across it,
"request denied", and initialed it.
He felt better.

What Toby missed most was the lack of an audience. He
needed to work on his sense of liming, his skills. He would
tell jokes and do imitations and routines at every opportunity.
It did not matter whether his audience was two GIs doing
guard duty with him in a lonely field, a busload of soldiers
on their way into town or a dishwasher on KP. Toby had to
make them laugh, win their applause.
Captain Sam Winters watched one day as Toby went
through one of his routines in the recreation hall. Afterward,
he went up to Toby and said, "I'm sorry your transfer didn't
work out, Temple. I think you have talent. When the war's

over, if you get to Hollywood, look me up." He grinned and
added, "Assuming I still have a job out there."
The following week Toby's battalion was sent into
combat.

In later years, when Toby recalled die war, what he
remembered were not the battles. At Samt-Lo he had been
a smash doing a mouth-sync act to a Bing Crosby record. At
Aachen he had sneaked into the hospital and told jokes to
the wounded for two hours before the nurses threw him out.
He remembered with satisfaction that one GI had laughed
so hard all his stitches had broken open. Metz was where he
had bombed out, but Toby felt that that wa.i only because the
audience was jittery about the Nazi planes flying overhead.
. The fighting that Toby did was incidental. He was cited
for bravery in the capture of a German command post. Toby
had really had no idea what was going on. He had been playing
John Wayne, and had gotten so earned aw;>y that it was
all over before he had time to be frightened.
To Toby, it was the entertaining that was important. In
Cherbourg he visited a whorehouse with a couple of friends,
and while they were upstairs, Toby stayed in the parlor doing
a routine for the madame and two of her girls. When he had
finished, the madame sent him upstairs, on the house.
That was Toby's war. All in all, it was not a bad war, and
time went by very quickly. When the war ended, it was 1945
and Toby was almost twenty-five years old. In appearance he
had not aged one day. He had the same sweet face and beguiling
blue eyes, and that hapless air of innocence about him.
Everyone was talking about going home. There was a
bride waiting in Kansas City, a mother and father in Bayonne,
a business in St. Louis. There was nothing waiting for Toby.
Except Fame.
He decided to go to Hollywood. It was time that God
made good on His promise.

"Do you know God? Have you seen the face of fesus?
I have seen Him, brothers and sisters, and I have heard His

voice, but He speaks only to those who kneel before Him and
confess their sins. God abhors the unrepentant. The bo"o of
God's wrath is bent and the flaming arrow of His righteous
anger is pointed at your wicked hearts, and at any moment
He will let go and the arrow of His retribution shall smite
your hearts! Look up to Him now, before it is too late!"

Josephine looked up toward the top of the tent, terrified,
expecting to see a flaming arrow shooting at her. She clutched
her mother's hand, but her mother was unaware of it. Her
face was flushed and her eyes were bright with fervor.
"Praise Jesus!" the congregation roared.

The revival meetings were held in a huge tent, on the
outskirts of Odessa, and Mrs. Czinski took Josephine to all of
them. The preacher's pulpit was a wooden platform raised six
feet above the ground. Immediately in front of the platform
was the glory pen, where sinners were brought to repent and
experience conversion. Beyond the pen were rows and rows of
hard wooden benches, packed with chanting, fanatic seekers of
salvation, awed by the threats of Hell and Damnation. It was
terrifying for a six-year-old child. The evangelists were Fundamentalists,
Holy Rollers and Pentecostalists and Methodists
and Adventists, and they all breathed Hell-fire and Damnation.
"Get on your knees, 0 ye sinners, and tremble before
the might of Jehovah! For your wicked ways have broken the
heart of Jesus Christ, and for that ye shall bear the punishment
of His Father's wrath' Look around at the faces of the
young children here, conceived in lust and filled with sin."
And little Josephine would burn with shame, feeling
everyone staring at her. When the bad headaches came,
Josephine knew that they were a punishment from God. She
prayed every night that they would go away, so she would
know that God had forgiven her. She wished she knew what
she had done that was so bad.
"And I'll sing Hallelujah, and you'll sing Hallelujah,
and we'll all sing Hallelujah when we arrive at Home."

"Liquor is the blood of the Devil, and tobacco is his
breath, and fornication is his pleasure. Are you guilty of

trafficking with Satan? Then you shall burn eternally in Hell,
damned forever, because Lucifer is coming to get you!"
And Josephine would tremble and look around wildly,
fiercely clutching the wooden bench so that the Devil could
not take her.
They sang, "I want to get to Heaven, my long-sought
rest." But little Josephine misunderstood and sang, "I want
to get to Heaven with my long short dress."
After the thundering sermons would come the Miracles.
Josephine would watch in frightened fascination as a procession
of crippled men and women limped and crawled and
rode in wheelchairs to the glory pen, where the preacher laid
hands on them and willed the powers of Heaven to heal them.
They would throw away their canes and their crutches, and
some of them would babble hysterically in strange tongues,
and Josephine would cower in terror.
The revival meetings always ended with the plate being
passed. "Jesus is watching you -- and He hates a miser." And
then it would be over. But the fear would stay with Josephine
for a long time.

In 1946, the town of Odessa, Texas, had a dark brown
taste. Long ago, when the Indians had lived there, it had been

the taste of desert sand. Now it was the taste of oil.
There were two kinds of people in Odessa: Oil People and the Others. The Oil People did not look down on the Others -- they simply felt sorry for them, for surely God meant everyone to have private planes and Cadillacs and swimming pools and to give charapugne parties for a hundred people. That was why He had put oil in Texas.
Josephine Czinski did not know that she was one of the Others. At six, Josephine Czinski was a beautiful child, with shiny black hair and deep brown eyes and a lovely oval face. Josephine's mother was a skilled seamstress who worked for the wealthy people in town, and she would take Josephine along as she fitted the Oil Ladies and turned bolts of fairy cloth into stunning evening gowns. The Oil People liked Josephine because she was a polite, friendly child, and they liked themselves for liking her. They felt it was democratic

.. ' them to aliow a poor kid from the other side of town to ale v,idi iheir children. Josephine was Polish, but she d.c, n"T look I'on^h, and while she could never be a member (if the Club. they were happy to give her visitors' pHvileges. ios'cplunc w;ii. allowed to play with the Oil Children and share their bicycles and ponies and hundred-dollar dolls, so that she came to live a dual life. There was her life at home in the tiny clapboard cottage with battered furniture and outdoor plumbing and doors that sagged on their hinges.
Then there was Josephine's life in beautiful colonial manions on large country estates. If Josephine stayed overnight at Cissy Topping's or Lindy Ferguson's, she was given a large bedroom all to herself, with breakfast served by maids and butlers. Josephine loved to get up in the middle of the night when everyone was asleep and go down and stare at the beautiful things in the house, the lovely paintings and heavy mono^rammed silver and antiques burnished by time and history. She would study them and caress them and tell herself that one day she would have such things, one day she would live in a grand house and be surrounded by beauty.
But in both of Josephine's worlds, she felt lonely. She was afraid to talk to her mother about her headaches and her fear of God because her mother had become a brooding fanatic, obsessed with God's punishment, welcoming it.
f.i^ephine did not want to discuss her fears with the Oil Children because they expected her to be bright and gay, as they were. And so, Josephine was forced to keep her terrors to herself.

On Josephine's seventh birthday, Brubaker's Department Store announced a photographic contest for the Most Beautiful Child in Odessa. The entry picture had to be taken in A-; photograph department of the store. The prize was a sold cup inscribed with the name of she winner. The cup

was placed in the department-store window, and Josephine
.^i.use-.i by the window even' day to stare at it. She wanted
it rnr.i-e than she had ever wanted anything in her life.
Josephine's mother would not let her enter the contest --
"Vanity is the devil's mirror,'' she said -- but one of the Oil

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Women who liked Josephine paid for her picture. From that
moment on, Josephine knew that the gold cup was hers.
She could visualize it sitting on her dresser. She would
polish it carefully every day. When Josephine found out
that she was in the finals, she was too excited to go to school.
She stayed in bed all day with an upset stomach, her happiness
too much for her to bear. This would be the first time that
she had owned anything beautiful.
The following day Josephine learned that the contest
had been won by Tina Hudson, one of the Oil Children.
Tina was not nearly as beautiful as Josephine, but Tina's
father happened to be on the board of directors of the chain
that owned Brubaker's Department Store.
When Josephine heard the news, she developed a headache
that made her want to scream with pain. She was afraid
for God to know how much that beautiful gold cup meant
to her, but He must have known because her headaches
continued. At night she would cry into her pillow, so that
her mother could not hear her.
A few days after the contest ended, Josephine was invited
to Tina's home for a weekend. The gold cup was sitting in
Tina's room on a mantel. Josephine stared at it for a long time.
When Josephine returned home, the cup was hidden in
her overnight case. It was still there when Tina's mother came
by for it and took it back.
Josephine's mother gave her a hard whipping with a
switch made from a long, green twig. But Josephine was not
angry with her mother.
The few minutes Josephine had held the beautiful gold
cup in her hands had been worth all the pain.
Hollywood, California, in 1946, was the film capital of
the world, a magnet for the talented, the greedy, the beautiful,
the hopeful and the weird. It was the land of palm trees and
Rita Hayworth and the Holy Temple of the Universal Spirit
and Santa Anita. It was the agent who was going to make you
an overnight star; it' was a con game, a whorehouse, an orange
grove, a shrine. It was a magical kaleidoscope, and each person
who looked into it saw his own vision.
To Toby Temple, Hollywood was where he was meant
to come. He arrived in town with an army duffel bag and
three hundred dollars in cash, moving into a cheap boardinghouse
on Cahuenga Boulevard. He had to get into action fast, before he went broke.
Toby knew all about Hollywood. It was
a town where you had to put up a front. Toby went into a
haberdasher7 on Vine Strtet, ordered a new wardrobe, and

with twenty dollars remaining in his pocket, strolled into the Hollywood Brown Derby, where all the stars dined. The walls were covered with caricatures of the most famous actors in Hollywood. Toby could feel the pulse of show business here, sense the power in die room. He saw The hostess walking toward him. She was a pretty redhead in her twenties and she had a sensational figure.
She smiled at Toby and said, "Can I help you?"
Toby could not resist it. He reached out 'with his two hands and grabbed her ripe melon breasts. A look of shpck came over her face. As she opened her mouth to cry out, Toby fixed his eyes in a glazed stare and said apologetically, "Excuse me, miss -- I'm not a sighted person."
"Oh! I'm sorry!" She was contrite for what she had been thinking, and sympathetic. She conducted Toby to a table, holding his arm and helping him sit down, and arranged for his order. When she came back to his table a few minutes later and caught him studying the pictures on the wall, Toby beamed up at her and said, "It's a miracle! I can see again!" He was so innocent and so funny that she could not help laughing. She laughed all through dinner with Toby, and at his jokes in bed that night.

Toby took odd jobs around Hollywood because they brought him to the fringes of show business. He parked cars at Qro's, and as the celebrities drove u" ^oby would open the car door with a bright smile ar:.' mi apt quip. 'Thi.y pid no attention. He was just a parking boy, and they did not even know he was alive. Toby watched the beautiful girls as they got out of the cars in their expensive, tight-fitting dresses, and he thought to himself, If you only knew what a big star I'm going to be, you'd drop all those creeps.

Toby made the rounds of agents, but he quickly learned that he was wasting his time. The agents were all star-fuckers. You could not look for them. They had to be looking for you. The name that Toby heard most often was Clifton Lawrence. He handled only the biggest talent and he made the most incredible deals. One day, Toby thought, Clifton Lawrence is going to be my agent.
Toby subscribed to the two bibles of show business: Daily Variety and the Hollywood Reporter. It made him feel like an insider. Forever Amber had been bought by Twentieth Century-Fox, and Otto Preminger was going to direct. Ava Gardner had been signed to star in Whistle Stop with George Raft and Jorja Curtright, and Life with Father had been bought by Warner Brothers. Then Toby saw an item that made his pulse start pounding. "Producer Sam Winters has been named Vice-President in Charge of Production at Pan-Pacific Studios."

7

When Sam Winters returned from the war his job at

Pan-Padfic Studios was waiting for him. Six months later, there was a shakeup. The head of the studio was fired, and Sam was asked to take over undl a new production head could be found. Sam did such a good job that the search was abandoned, and he was officially made Vice-President in Charge of Production. It was a nerve-racking, ulcer-making job, but Sam lo<td it more than he loved anything in the world.

Hollywood was a three-ring circus filled with wild, insane characters, a minefield with a parade of idiots dancing across it. Most actors, directors and producers were selfcentered megalomaniacs, ungrateful, vicious and destructive.

But as far as Sam was concerned, if they had talent, nothing else mattered. Talent was the magic key.

Sam's office door opened and Lucille Elkins, his secretary, came in with the freshly opened mail. Lucille was a permanent fixture, one of the competent professionals who stayed on forever and watched her bosses come and go.

"Clifton Lawrence is here to see you," Lucille said.

"Tell him to come in."

Sam liked Lawrence. He had style. Fred Alien had said, "All the sincerity in Hollywood could be hidden in a gnat's navel and there'd still be room for four caraway seeds and an agent's heart."

Cliff Lawrence was more sincere than most agents. He was a Hollywood legend, and his client Kst ran the gamut of who's who in the entertainment field. He had a one-man office and was constantly on the move, servicing clients in London, Switzerland, Rome and New York. He was on intiate terms with all the important Hollywood executives and played in a weekly gin game that included the production heads of three studios. Twice a year, Lawrence chartered a yacht, gathered half a dozen beautiful "models" and invited top studio executives for a week's "fishing trip". Clifton Lawrence kept a fully stocked beachhouse at Malibu that was available to his friends anytime they wanted to use it.

It was a symbiotic relationship that Clifton had with Hollywood, and it was profitable for everyone.

Sam watched as the door opened and Lawrence bounced in, elegant in a beautifully tailored suit. He walked up to Sam, extended a perfectly manicured hand and said, "Just wanted to say a quick hello. How's everything, dear boy?"

"Let me put it this way," Sam said. "If days were ships, today would be the Titanic."

Clifton Lawrence made a commiserating noise.

"What did you think of the preview last night?" Sam asked.

"Trim the first twenty minutes and shoot a new ending, and you've got yourself a big hit."

"Bull's-eye." Sam smiled. "That's exactly what we're doing. Any clients to sell me today?"

Lawrence grinned. "Sorry. They're all working."

And it was true. Clifton Lawrence's select stable of top
stars, with a sprinkling of directors and producers, were always
in demand.
"See you for dinner Friday, Sam," Clifton said. "Czao."
He turned and walked ouc the door.
Lucille's voice came over the intercom. "Dallas Burke is
here."
"Send him in."
"And Mel Foss would like to see you. He said it's urgent."
Mel Foss was head of the television division of PanPadfic
Studios.
Sam glanced at his desk calendar. "Tell him to make it

breakfast tomorrow morning. Eight o'clock. The Polo Lounge."
In the outer office, the telephone rang and Lucille picked
it up. "Mr. Winter's office."
An unfamiliar voice said, "Hello there. Is the great man
in?"
"Who's calling, please?"
"Tell him it's an old buddy of his -- Toby Temple. We
were in the army together. He said to look him up if I ever
got to Hollywood, and here I am."
"He's in a meeting, Mr. Temple. Could I have him call
you back?"
"Sure." He gave her his telephone number, and Lucille
threw it into the wastebasket. This was not the first time
someone had tried the old-army-buddy routine on her.

Dallas Burke was one of the motion-picture industry's
pioneer directors. Burke's films were shown at every college
that had a course in movie making. Half a dozen of his earlier
pictures were considered classics, and none of his work was less
than 5'rilliant and innovative. Burke was in his late seventies
now, and his once massive frame had shrunk so that his clothes
seemed to flap around him.
"It's good to see you again, Dallas," Sam said as the old
man walked into the office.
"Nice to see you, kid." He indicated the man with him.
"You know my agent."
"Certainly. How are you, Peter?"
They all found seats.
"I hear you have a story to tell me," Sam said to Dallas
Burke.
"This one's a beauty" There was a quavering excitement
in the old man's voice.
"I'm dying to hear it, Dallas," Sam said. "Shoot."
Dallas Burke leaned forward and began talking. "What's
everybody in the world most interested in, kid? Love -- right?
And this idea's about the most holy land of love there is --
the love of a mother for her child." His voice grew stronger
as he became immersed in his story. "We open in Long Island

with a nineteen-year-old girl working as a secretary for a

wealthy family. Old money. Gives us a chance for n slick
background—know what I mean? High-society suifl. The
man she works for is married to a tight-assed blueblood. He
likes the secretary, and she likes him, even though he's older."
Only half-listening, Sam wondered whether the story was
going to be Back Street or Imitation of Life. Not that it
mattered, because whichever it was, Sam was going to buy it.
It had been almost twenty years since anyone had given Dallas
Burke a picture to direct. Sam could not blame the industry.
Burke's last three pictures had been expensive, old-fashioned
and box-office disasters. Dallas Burke was finished forever as a
picture maker. But he was a human being and he was still
alive, and somehow he had to be taken care of, because he had
not saved a cent. He had been offered a room in the Motion
Picture Relief Home, but he had indignantly turned it down.
"I don't want your fucking charity!" he had shouted. "You're
talking to the man who directed Doug Fairbanks and Jack
Barrymore and Milton Sills and Bill Farnum. I'm a giant, you
pygmy sons of bitches!"
And he was. He was a legend; but even legends had to
eat.
When Sam had become a producer, he had telephoned
an agent he knew and told him to bring in Dallas Burke with
a story idea. Since then, Sam had bought unusable stories
from Dallas Burke every year for enough money for the old
man to live on, and while Sam had been away in the army, he
had seen to it that the arrangement continued.
"... so you see," Dallas Burke was saying, "the baby
grows up without knowing her mother. But the mother keeps
track of her. At the end, when the daughter marries this rich
doctor, we have a big wedding. And do you know what the
twist is, Sam? Listen to this — it's great. They won't let the
mother in! She has to sneak in to the back of the church to
watch her own kid getting married. There won't be a dry eye
in the audience.... Well, that's it. What do you think?"
Sam had guessed wrong. Stella Dallas. He glanced at the
agent, who averted his eyes and studied the tips of his
expensive shoes in embarrassment.
"It's great," Sam said. "It's exactly the kind of picture the
studio's looking for." Sam turned to the agent. "Call Business
Affairs and work out a deal with them, Peter. I'll tell them to
expect your call."
The agent nodded.
"Tell them they're gonna have to pay a stiff price for
this one, or I'll take it to Wamer Brothers," Dallas Burke
said. "I'm giving you first crack at it because we're friends."
"I appreciate that," Sam said.
He watched as the two men left the office. Strictly
speaking, Sam knew he had no right to spend the company's

money on a sentimental gesture like this. But the motionpicture
industry owed something to men like Dallas Burke,
for without him and his kind there would have been no
industry.

At eight o'clock the following morning, Sam Winters
drove up under the portico of the Beverly Hills Hotel. A few
minutes later, he was threading his way across the Polo Lounge,
nodding to friends, acquaintances and competitors. More deals
were made in this room over breakfast, lunch and cocktails
than were consummated in all the offices of all the studios
combined. Mel Foss looked up as Sam approached.
"Morning, Sam." ^
The two men shook hands and Sam slid into the booth
across from Foss. Eight months ago Sam had hired Foss to
run the television division of Pan-Pacific Studios. Television
was the new baby in the entertainment world, and it was
growing wiA incredible rapidity. All the studios that had once
looked down on television were now involved in it.
The waitress came to take their orders, and when she
had left, Sam said, "What's the good news, Mel?"
Mel Foss shook his head. "There is no good news," he
said. "We're in trouble."
Sam waited, saying nothing.
"We're not going to get a pickup on "The Raiders'."
Sam looked at him in surprise. "The ratings are great.
Why would the network want to cancel it? It's tough enough
to get a hit show."
"It's not the show," Foss said. "It's Jack Nolan." Jack
Nolan was the star of "The Raiders", and he had been an
instant success, both critically and with the public.
"What's the matter with him?" Sam asked. He hated
|Ael Foss's habit of forcing him to draw information from
him.
"Have you read this week's issue of Peek magazine?"
"I don't read it any week. It's a garbage pail." He
(uddenly realized what Foss was driving at. "They nailed
Nolan!"
^ "In black and white," Foss replied. "The dumb son of
a bitch put on his prettiest lace dress and went out to a party.
Someone took pictures."
"How bad is it?"
"Couldn't be worse. I got a dozen calls from the network
yesterday. The sponsors and the network want out. No one
wants to be associated with a screaming fag."
"Transvestite," Sam said. He had been counting heavily
on presenting a strong television report at the board meeting
in New York next month. The news from Foss would put
an end to that. Losing "The Raiders" would be a blow.
Unless he could do something.

When Sam returned to his office, Lucille waved a sheaf
of messages at him. "The emergencies are on top," she said.

"They need you -- "
"Later. Get me William Hunt at IBC."
Two minutes later, Sam was talking to the head of the International Broadcasting Company. Sam had known Hunt casually for a number of years, and liked him. Hunt had started as a bright young corporate lawyer and had worked his way to the top of the network ladder. They seldom had any business dealings because Sam was not directly involved with television. He wished now that he had taken the time to cultivate Hunt.
When Hunt came on the line, Sam forced himself to sound relaxed and casual. "Morning, Bill."
"This is a pleasant surprise," Hunt said. "It's been a long time, Sam."
"Much too long. That's the trouble with this business, Bill. You never have time for the people you like."
"Too true."
Sam made his voice sound offhand. "By the wsy, did you happen to sw, that silly article in Peek?"
"You know I did." Hunt sa'd quietly. "That's why we're canceling the show, Sam." The words had a finality to them.
"Bill," Sam said, "what would you say if I told you that Jack Nolan was framed?"
There was a laugh from the other end of the line. "I'd say you should think about becoming a writer."
"I'm serious," Sam said, earnestly. "I know Jack Nolan. He's as straight as we are. That photograph was taken at a costume party. It was his girlfriend's birthday; and he put the dress on as a gag." Sam could feel his palms sweating.
"I can't--"
"I'll tell you how much confidence I have in Jack," Sam said into the phone. "I've just set him for the lead in Laredo, our big Western feature for next year."
There was a pause. "Are you serious, Sam?"
"You're damn right I am. It's a three-million-dollar picture. If Jack Nolan turned out to be a fag, he'd be laughed off the screen. The exhibitors wouldn't touch it. Would I take that kind of gamble if I didn't know what I was talking about?"
"Well..." There was hesitation in Bill Hunt's voice.
"Come on, Bill, you're not going to let a lousy gossip sheet like Peek destroy a good man's career. You like the show, don't you?"
"Very much. It's a damned good show. But the sponsors -- "
"It's your network. You've got more sponsors than you have air time. We've given you a hit show. Let's not fool around with a success."
"Well..."
"Has Mel Foss talked to you yet about the studio's plans for 'The Raiders' for next season?"
"No..."
"I guess he was planning to surprise you," Sam said.
"Wait until you hear what he has in mind' Guest stars, bigname

Western writers, shooting on location--the works! If
"The Raiders' doesn't skyrocket to number one. I'm in the
wrong business."
There was a brief hesitation. Then Bill Hunt said, "Have
Me! phone me. Maybe we all got a little panicked here."
"He'll call you," Sam promised.
"And, Sam — you understand my position. I wasn't trying
to hurt anybody."
"Of course you weren't," Sam said, generously. "I know
you too well to think that, Bill. That's why I felt I owed it
to you to let you hear the truth."
"I appreciate that."
"What about lunch next week?"
"Love it. I'll call you Monday."
They exchanged good-byes and hung up. Sam sat there,
drained. Jack Nolan was as queer as an Indian dime. Someone
should have taken him away in a net long ago. And Sam's
'whole future depended on maniacs like that. Running a studio
was like walking a high wire over Niagara Falls in a blizzard.
Anyone's crazy to do this job, Sam thought. He picked up his
private phone and dialed. A few moments later, he was talking
to Mel Foss.
" 'The Raiders' stays on the air," Sam said.
"What?" There was stunned disbelief in Foss's voice.
"That's right. I want yon rn have a fast talk with Jack
Nolan. Tell him if he ever steps out of line again, I'll personally
ran him out of this town and back to Fire Island! I mean it.
If he gets the urge to suck something, tell him to try a banana! "
Sam slammed the phone down. He leaned back in his
chair, thinking. He had forgotten to tell Foss about the format
changes he had ad-libbed to Bill Hunt. He would have to find
a writer who could come up with a Western script called
Laredo.
The door burst open and Lucille stood there, her face
white. "Can you get right down to Stage Ten? Someone set
it on fire."
Mrs. Tanner, people talk about your school and the wonderful
plays you put on here. I'll bet you have no idea of the
reputation this place has."
She studied him a moment. "I do have an idea. That's
why I have to be careful to keep out phonies."
Toby felt his face begin to redden, but he smiled boyishly
and said, "I'll bet. A lot of them must try to crash in here."
''Quite a few," Mrs. Tanner agreed. She glanced at the
card she held in her hand. "Toby Temple."
"You probably haven't heard the name,'' he explained,
"because for the last couple of years, I've been -- "
"Playing repertory in England."
He nodded. "Right"
Alice Tanner looked at him and said quietly, "Mr.
Temple, Americans are not permitted to play in English
repertory. British Actors Equity doesn't allow it."
Toby felt a sudden sinking sensation in the pit of his

stomach.
"You might have checked first and saved us both this
embarrassment. I'm sorry, but we only enroll professional
talent here." She started back toward her desk. The interview
was over.
"Hold it! " His voice was like a whiplash.
She turned in astonishment. At that instant, Toby had no
idea what he was going to say or do. He only knew that his
whole future was hanging in the balance. The woman standing
in front of him was the stepping-stone to everything he wanted,
everything he had worked and sweated for, and he was not
going to let her stop him.
"You don't judge talent by ruies. lady! Okay--so I
haven't acted. And why? Because people like you we-i'r give
me a chance. You see what I mean?" It was W. C. Fields's
voice.
Alice Tanner opened her mouth to interrupt him, but
Toby never gave her the opportunity. He was Jimmy Cagney
telling her to give the poor kid a break, and James Stewan
agreeing with him, and Clark Gable saying he was dying to
work with the kid and Cary Grant adding that he thought
the boy was brilliant. A host of Hollywood stars was in that

ion! and they were all saying funny things, things that
oby Temple had never thought of before. The words, the
kes poured out of him in a frenzy of desperation. He was
man drowning in the darkness of his own oblivion, clinging
Va life raft of words, and the words were all that were keep- a him afloat.
He was soaked in perspiration, running around
ie room, imitating the movement of each character who was
Bring. He was manic, totally outside of himself, forgetting
here he was and what he was here for until he heard Alice
aimer saying, "Stop it! Stop it!"
Tears of laughter were streaming down her face.
"Stop it1" she repeated, gasping fur breath.
And slowly, Toby came down to earth. Mrs. 'I anner had
:aken out a handkerchief and was wiping her eyes.
"You--you're insane," she said. "Do you know that?"
11 Toby stared at her, a feeling of elation slowly filling him,
Kring, exalting him. "You liked it, huh?"
Alice Tanner shook her head and took a deep breath to
amtrol her laughter and said, "Not -- not very much."
Toby looked at her, filled with rage. She had been laughg
at him, not with him. He had been making a fool of
_mself.
"Then what were you laughing at?" Toby demanded.
She smiled and said quietly, "You. That was the most
Erenetic performance I've ever seen. Somewhere, hidden
ineath all those movie stars, is a young man with a lot of
lent. You don't have to imitate other people. You're naturally
any."

Toby felt his anger begin to seep away.
"I think one day you could be really good if you're willing to work hard at it. Are you?"
He gave her a slow, beatific grin and said, "Let's roll up)ur sleeves and go to work."
Josephine worked very hard Saturday morning, fielping her mother clean the house. At noon. Cissy and some other friends picked her up to take her on a picnic.
Mrs. Csinski watched Josephine being driven off in the

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long limousine filled with the children of the Oil People. She thought. One day something bad is going to happen to Josephine. I shouldn't let her be with those people. They're the Devil's children. And she wondered if there was a devil in Josephine. She would talk to the Reverend Damian. He would know what to do.
9

Actors West was divided into two sections: the Showcase group, which consisted of the more experienced actors, and the Workshop group. It was the Showcase actors who staged plays that were covered by the studio talent scouts. Toby had been put with the Workshop actors. Alice Tanner had told him that it might be six months or a year before he would lie ready to do a Showcase play.
Toby found the classes interesting, but the magic ingredient was missing: the audience, the applauders, the laughters, the people who would adore him.
In the weeks since Toby had begun classes, he had seen very little of the head of the school. Occasionally, Alice Tanner Would drop into the Workshop to watch improvisations and give a word of encouragement, or Toby would run into her on las way to class. But he had hoped for something more intimate. He found himself thinking about Alice Tanner a great deal. She was what Toby thought of as a classy dame, and t)»at appealed to him; he felt it was what he deserved. The idea of her crippled leg had bothered him at fast, but it had slowly begun to take on a sexual fascination.
Toby talked to her again about putting him in a Showcase play where the critics and talent scouts could see him.
"You're not ready yet," Alice Tanner told him.
She was standing in his way, keeping him from his success.
7 hace to do something about that, Toby decided.
A Showcase play was being staged, and on the opening night Toby was seated in a middle row next to a student' named Karen, a fat little character actress from his class. Toby had played scenes with Karen, and he knew two things about her: she never wore underclothes and she had bad breath.
She had done everything but send up smoke signals to let Toby know that she wanted to go to bed with him, but he had pretended not to understand. Jesus, he thought, fucking her

would be like being sucked into a tub of hot lard.

As they sat there waiting for the curtain to go up, Karen excitedly pointed out the critics from the Los Angeles Times and Herald-Express, and the talent scouts from Twentieth Century-Fox, MGM and Wamer Brothers. It enraged Toby. They were here to see the actors up on the stage, while he sat in the audience like a dummy. He had an almost uncontrollable impulse to stand up and do one of his routines, dazzle them, show them what real talent looked like.
The audience enjoyed the play, but Toby was obsessed with the talent scouts, who sat within touching distance, the men who held his future in Aeir hands. Well, if Actors West was the lure to bring them to him, Toby would use it; but he had no intention of waiting six months, or even six weeks.

The following morning, Toby went to Alice Tanner's office.
"How did you like the play?" she asked.
"It was wonderful," Toby said. "Those actors are really great." He gave a self-deprecating smile. "I see what you mean when you say I'm not ready yet."
"They've had more experience than you, that's all, but you have a unique personality. You're going to make it. Just be patient."
He sighed. "I don't know. Maybe I'd be better off forgetting the whole thing and selling insurance or something."
She looked at him in quick surprise. "You mustn't," she said.
Toby shook his head. "After seeing those pros last night, I -- I don't think I have it."
"Of course you have, Toby. I won't let you talk like that."
In her voice was the note he had been waiting to hear. It was not a teacher talking to a pupil now, it was a woman talking to a man, encouraging him, caring about him. Toby felt a small thrill of satisfaction.
. : He shrugged helplessly. "I don't know, anymore. I'm all rfbne in this town. I have no one to talk to."
* "You can always talk to me, Toby. I'd like to be your friend."
4: He could hear the sexual huskiness come into her voice. Ibby's blue eyes held all the wonder in the world as he gazed at her. As she watched him, he walked over and locked the office door. He returned to her, fell on his knees, buried his head in her lap and, as her fingers touched his hair, he slowly lifted her skirt, exposing the poor thigh encased in the cruel steel brace. Gently removing the brace, he tenderly kissed the red marks left by the steel bars. Slowly, he unfastened her j|rter belt, all the time telling Alice of his love and his need tils her, and kissed his way down to the moist lips exposed before him. He carried her to the deep leather couch and made love to her.
That evening, Toby moved in with Alice Tanner.

In bed that night, Toby found that Alice Tanner was a
pitifully lonely woman, desperate for someone to talk to,
someone to love. She had been born in Boston. Her father was
a wealthy manufacturer who had given her a large allowance
and paid no further attention to her. Alice had loved the
theater and had studied to be an actress, but in college she
had contracted polio and that had put an end to her dream.
She told Toby how it had affected her life. The boy she was
engaged to had jilted her when he learned the news. Alice had
left home and married a psychiatrist, who committed suicide
ax months later. It was as though all her emotions had been
bottled up inside her. Now they poured out in a violent
eruption that left her feeling drained and peaceful and
marvelously content.
Toby made love to Alice until she almost fainted with
ecstasy, filling her with his huge penis and making slow circles
with his hips until he seemed to be touching every part of her
body. She moaned, ^Ob, darling, I love you so much. Oh,
God, how I love this!"
But when it came to school, Toby found that he had no
influence with Alice. He talked to her about putting him in
the next Showcase play, introducing him to casting directors,
speaking to important studio people about him, but she was
firm. "You'll hurt yourself if you push too fast, darling. Rule
one: &e first impression you make is the most important. If
they don't like you the first time, they'll never go back to see
you a second time. You've got to be ready."
The instant the words were out, she became The Enemy.
She was against him. Toby swallowed his fury and forced
himself to smile at her. "Sure. It's just that I'm impatient. I
want to make it for you as much as for me."
"Do you? Oh, Toby, I love you so much!"
"I love you, too, Alice." And he smiled into her adoring
eyes. He knew he had to circumvent this bitch who was standing
in the way of what he wanted. He hated her and he
punished her.
When they went to bed, he made her do things she had
never done before, things he had never asked a whore to do;
using her mouth and her fingers and her tongue. He pushed
her further and further, forcing her into a series of humiliations.
And each time he got her to do something more degrading,
he would praise her, the way one praises a dog for
learning a new trick, and she would he happy because she had
pleased him. And the more he degraded her, the more degraded
he felt. He was punishing himself, and he had not the faintest
idea why.
Toby had a plan in mind, and his chance to put it into
action came sooner than he had anticipated. Alice Tanner
announced that the Workshop class was going to put on a
private show for the advanced classes and their guests on Ae
following Friday. Each student could choose his own project.
Toby prepared a monologue and rehearsed it over an dover.

On the morning of the show, Toby waited until class was
over and walked up to Karen, the fat actress who had sat
next to him during the play. "Would you do me a favor?" he
asked casually.

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"Sure, Toby." Her voice was surprised and eager.
Toby stepped back to gel away from her breath. "I'm
gulling a g^ on an °^ friend of mine. I want you to telephone
iQifton Lawrence's secretary and tell her you're Sam Goldwyn's
^ccretary, and that Mr. Goldwyn would like Mr. Lawrence
:fa come to the show tonight to see a brilliant new comic.
There'll be a ticket waiting for him at the box office."
Karen stared at him. "Jesus, old lady Tanner would have
my head. You know she never allows outsiders at the Workshop
shows."
"Believe me, it'll be all right." He took her arm and
squeezed it. "You busy this afternoon?"
She swallowed, her breath coming a little faster. "Not--
not if you'd like to do something."
i, "I'd like to do something."
t : Three hours later, an ecstatic Karen made the phone call.

;,'::, The auditorium was filled with actors from the various
; dasses and their guests, but the only person Toby had eyes
,' for was the man who sat in an aisle seat in the third row.
.'I Toby had been in a panic, fearful that his ruse would not
'F' work. Surely a man as clever as Clifton Lawrence would see
w'through the trick. But he had not. He was here.
y A boy and girl were on stage now, doing a scene from
^ The Sea Gull. Toby hoped they would not drive Clifton
Lawrence out of the theater. Finally, the scene was finished,
tad the actors took their bows and left the stage.
It was Toby's turn. Alice suddenly appeared at his side
i,in the wings, whispering, "Good luck, darling", unaware that
his luck was silting in the audience.
"Thanks, Alice." Toby breathed a silent prayer, straight ened his shoulders, bounced out on stage and smiled boyishly
at the audience. "Hello, there. I'm Toby Temple. Hey, did
you ever stop to think about names, and how our parents
choose them? It's crazy. I asked my mother why she named
me Toby. She. said she took one look at my mug, and that
was it."
His look was what got the laugh. Toby appeared so
innocent and wistful, standing up there on that stage, that they
loved him. The jokes he told where terrible, but somehow
that did not matter. He was so vulnerable that they wanted
to protect him, and they did it with their applause and their
laughter. It was like a gift of love that flowed into Toby, filling
him with an almost unbearable exhilaration. He was Edward
G. Robinson and Jimmy Cagney, and Cagney was saying, "You
dirty rat! Who do you think you're giving orders to?"

And Robinson's, "To you, you punk. I'm Little Caesar.
I'm the boss. You're nuthin'. Do you know what that means?"
"Yeah, you dirty rat. You're the boss of nuthin'."
A roar. The audience adored Toby.
Bogart was there, snarling, "I'd spit in your eye, punk,
if my lip wasn't stuck over my teeth."
And the audience was enchanted.
Toby gave them his Peter Lorre. "I saw this little girl
in her room, playing with it, and I got excited. I don't know
what came over me. I couldn't help myself. I crept into her
room, and I pulled the rope tighter and tighter, and I broke
her yoyo."
A big laugh. He was rolling.
He switched over to Laurel and Hardy, and a movement
in the audience caught his eye and he glanced up. Clifton
Lawrence was walking out of the theater.
The rest of the evening was a blur to Toby.
When the show was over, Alice Tanner came up to Toby. "You were wonderful,
darling! I..."
He could not bear to look at her, to have anyone look
at him. He wanted to be alone with his misery, to try to cope
with the pain that was tearing him apart. His world had
collapsed around him. He had had his chance, and he had
failed. Clifton Lawrence had walked out on him, had not even
waited for him to finish. Clifton Lawrence was a man who
knew talent, a professional who handled the best. If Lawrence
did not think Toby had anything... He felt sick to his
stomach.
"I'm going for a walk," he said to Alice.

He walked down Vine Street and Gower, past Columbia
Pictures and RKO and Paramount. All the gates were locked.

r
He walked along Hollywood Boulevard and looked up at the
huge mocking sign on the hill that said, "hollywoodland".
There was no Hollywoodland. It was a state of mind, a phony
dream that lured thousands of otherwise normal people into
'?'-the insanity of trying to become a star. The word Hollywood
had become a lodestone for miracles, a trap that seduced people
i with wonderful promises, siren songs of dreams fulfilled, and
' then destroyed them.
Toby walked the streets all night long, wondering what
he was going to do with his life. His faith in himself had been
;. shattered and he felt rootless and adrift. He had never imagined
himself doing anything other than entertaining people, and if
ie he could not do that, all that was left for him were dull,
'I;! monotonous jobs where he would be caged up for the rest of
-S-tos life. Mr. Anonymous. No one would ever know who he
^ was. He thought of the long, dreary years, the bitter loneliness
^of a thousand nameless towns, of the people who had applauded

^ him and laughed at him and loved him. Toby wept. He wept
I" for the past and for the future.
?V } He wept because he was dead.

^ It was dawn when Toby returned to the white stucco
^g bungalow he shared with Alice. He walked into the bedroom
^ and looked down at her sleeping figure. He had thought ,that
fr: she would be the open sesame to the magic kingdom. But
»;', there was no magic kingdom. Not for him. He would leave.
' He had no idea where he would go. He was almost twenty& seven years old and
he had no future.
He lay down on the couch, exhausted. He closed his eyes;
' listening to the sounds of the city stirring into life. The mom^ ing sounds
of cities are the same, and he thought of Detroit.
^ His mother. She was standing in the kitchen cooking apple
iz tarts for him. He could smell her wonderful musky female
odor mingled with the smell of apples cooking in butter, and
she was saying, God wants you to be famous.
!:- He was standing alone on an enormous stage, blinded
'^ by floodlights, trying to remember his lines. He tried to speak
but he had lost his voice. He grew panicky. There was a great
rumbling noise from the audience, and through the blinding
lights Toby could see the spectators leaving their seats and
running toward the stage to attack him, to kill him. Their love
had turned to hate. They were surrounding him, grabbing
him, chanting, "Toby! Toby! Toby!"
Toby suddenly jerked awake, his mouth dry with fright.
Alice Tanner was leaning over him, shaking him.
"Toby! Telephone. It's Clifton Lawrence."

Clifton Lawrence's office was in a small; elegant building
on Beverly Drive, just south of Wilshire. French Impressionist
paintings hung from the carved boiserie, and before the dark
green marble fireplace a sofa and some antique chairs were
grouped around an exquisite tea table. Toby had never seen
anything like it.
A shapely, redheaded secretary was pouring tea. "How
do you like your tea, Mr. Temple?"
Mr. Temple! "One sugar, please."
"There you are." A little smile and she was gone.
Toby did not know that the tea was a special blend
imported from Fortnum and Mason, nor that it was steeping
in Irish Baleek, but he knew it tasted wonderful. In fact, everything
about this office was wonderful, especially the dapper
little man who sat in an armchair studying him. Clifton Lawrence
was smaller than Toby had expected, bur he radiated
a sense of authority and power.
"I can't tell you how much I appreciate your seeing me,"
Toby said. "I'm sorry I had to trick you into --"
Clifton Lawrence threw his head back and laughed.
"Trick me? I had lunch with Goldwyn yesterday. I went to
watch you last night because I wanted to see if your talent
matched your nerve. It did."

"But you walked out --" Toby exclaimed.
"Dear boy, you don't have to eat the entire jar of caviar to know if it's good, right? I knew what you had in sixty seconds."
Toby felt that sense of euphoria building up in him again. After the black despair of the night before, to be lifted to the heights like this, to have his life handed back to him --
"I have a hunch about you, Temple," Clifton Lawrence

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said. "I think it would be exciting to take someone young od build his career. I've derided to take you on as a client."
The feeling of joy was exploding inside Toby. He wanted to stand up and scream aloud. Clifton Lawrence was going to ^be his agent!
"...handle you on one condition," Clifton Lawrence was saying. "That you do exactly as I tell you. I don't stand for temperament. You step out of line just once, and we're finished. Do you understand?"
' Toby nodded quickly. "Yes, sir. I understand."
"The first thing you have to do is face the truth." He smiled at Toby and said, "Your act is terrible. Definitely bottom drawer."
It was as though Toby had been kicked in the stomach. Clifton Lawrence had brought him here to punish him for that stupid phone call; he was not going to handle him. He ...
But the little agent continued. "Last night was amateur night, and that's what you are--an amateur." Clifton Lawrence rose from his chair and began to pace. "I'm going to tell ^ou what you have, and I'm going to tell you what you need to become a star."
Toby sat there.
"Let's start with your material," Clifton said. "You could put butter and salt on it and peddle it in theater lobbies."
"Yes, sir. Well, some of it might be a little corny, but --"
"Next. You have no style."
Toby felt his hands begin to clench. "The audience seemed to--"
"Next. You don't know how to move. You're a lox."
Toby said nothing.
The little agent walked over to him, looked down and said softly, reading Toby's mind, "If you're so bad, what are you doing here? You're here because you've got something that money can't buy. When you stand up on that stage, the audience wants to eat you up. They love you. Do you have any idea how much that could be worth?"
Toby took a deep breath and sat back. "Tell me."
"More than you could ever dream. With the right material and the proper kind of handling, you can be a star."
Toby sat there, basking in the warm glow of Clifton Lawrence's words, and it was as though everything Toby had done all his life had led to this moment, as though he

were already a star, and it had all happened. Just as his mother had promised him.
"The key to an entertainer's success is personality," Clifton Lawrence was saying. "You can't buy it and you can't fake it. You have to be born with it. You're one of the lucky ones, dear boy." He glanced at the gold Piaget watch on his Wrist. "I've set up a meeting for you with O'Hanlon and Rainger at two o'clock. They're the best comedy writers in the business. They work for all the top comics."
Toby said nervously, "I'm afraid I haven't much mon --"
Clifton Lawrence dismissed it with a wave of his hand.
"Not to worry, dear boy. You'll pay me back later."
Long after Toby Temple had left, Clifton Lawrence sat there thinking about him, smiling to himself at that wide-eyed innocent face and those trusting, guileless blue eyes. It had been many years since Clifton had represented an unknown.
All his clients were important stars, and every studio fought for their services. The excitement had long since gone. The early days had been more fun, more stimulating. It would be a challenge to take this raw, young kid and develop him, build him into a hot property. Clifton had a feeling that he was really going to enjoy this experience. He liked the boy. He liked him very much indeed.

The meeting took place at the Twentieth Century-Fox studios on Pico Boulevard in West Los Angeles, where O'Hanlon and Rainger had their offices. Toby had expected something lavish, on the order of Clifton Lawrence's suite, but the writers' quarters were drab and dingy, located in a small wooden bungalow on the lot.
An untidy, middle-aged secretary in a cardigan ushered Toby into the inner office. The walls were a dirty applegreen, and the only adornment was a battered dart board and a "plan ahead" sign with the last Aree letters squeezed together. A broken Venetian blind partially filtered out the sun's rays that fell across a dirty brown carpet worn down to die canvas. There were two scarred desks, back to back, each littered with papers and pencils and half-empty cartons of cold Ooffee.
i;. . "Hi, Toby. Excuse the mess. It's the maid's day off," KyHanlon greeted him. "I'm O'Hanlon." He indicated his -giyartner. "This is -- er --?"
,1|-- "Rainger."
;|t "Ah, yes. This is Rainger."
|IJ| O'Hanlon was large and rotund and wore horn-rimmed ^|da$ses. Rainger was small and frail. Both men were in their .'iyitflriy thirties and had been a successful writing team for ten ftyears. In all the time that Toby was to work with them, he Salways referred to them as "the boys".
5 Toby said, "I understand you fellas are going to write :3||^ome jokes for me."
A* O'Hanlon and Rainger exchanged a look. Rainger said, "Cliff Lawrence thinks you might be America's new sex

symbol. Let's see what you can do. Have you got an act?"
l "Sure," Toby replied. He remembered what Clifton had
seed about it. Suddenly, he felt diffident.
The two writers sat down on the couch and crossed their
5. turns.
"Entertain us," O'Hanlon said.
Toby looked at them. "Just like that ?"
"What would you like?" Rainger asked. "An introduction
from a sixty-piece orchestra?" He turned to O'Hanlon. "Get
the music department on the phone."
You prick, thought Toby. You're on my shit list, both of
you. He knew what they were trying to do. They were trying
to make him look bad so they could go back to Clifton Lawrence
and say, We can't help him. He's a stiff. Well, he was
t ^fc -not going to let them get away with it. He put on a smile he
, did not feel, and went into his Abbott and Costello routine.
I ^. "Hey, Lou, ain't you ashamed of yourself? You're turnin' into
N" a bum. Why don't you go out and get yourself a job?"
'I got a job."
"Certainly. It keeps me busy all day, 1 got regular hours,
and I'm home in time for dinner every night."
The two of them were studying Toby now, weighing him,
analyzing him,, and in the middle of his rouane they began
talking, as though Toby were not in the room.
"He doesn t know how to stand."
"He uses his hands like he's chopping wood. Maybe we
could write a woodchopper act for him."
"He pushes too hard."
"Jesus, with that material--wouldn't you?"
Toby was getting more upset by the moment. He did
not have to stay here and be insulted by these two maniacs.
Their material was probably lousy anyway.
Finally, he could stand it no longer. He stopped, his
voice trembling with rage. "I don't need you bastards! Thanks
for the hospitality." He started for the door.
Rainger stood up in genuine amazement. "Hey! What's
the matter with you?"
Toby turned on him in fury. "What the fuck do you
think is the matter? You--you--" He was so frustrated, he
was on the verge of tears.
Rainger turned to look at O'Hanlon in bewilderment.
"We must have hurt his feelings."
"Golly."
Toby took a deep breath. "Look, you two, I don't care
if you don't like me, but --"
"We love you! " O'Hanlon exclaimed.
"We think you're darling!" Rainger chimed in.
Toby looked from one to the other in complete bafflement.
"What? You acted like --"
"You know your trouble, Toby? You're insecure. RelaxSure,
you've got a lot to learn, but on the other hand, if you
were Bob Hope. you wouldn't be here."
O'Hanlou added, "And do you know why? Because

Bob's up in Carmel today."
"Playing golf. Do you play golf?" Rainger asked.
"No."
The two writers looked at each other in dismay. "There
go all the golf jokes. Shit!"

O'Hanlon picked up the telephone. "Bring in some
toffee, will you, Zsa Zsa?" He put down the phone and turned
Toby. "Do you know how many would-be comics there are
this quaint little business we're in?"
Toby shook his head.
"I can tell you exactly. Three billion seven hundred and
wty-eight million, as of six o'clock last night. And that's
lot including Milton Berle's brother. When there's a full
noon, they all crawl out of the woodwork. There are only half a
;fd6zen really top comics. The others will never make it. Comedy
Jlj^s .the most serious business in the world. It's god damned hard
Si^work being funny, whether you're a comic or a comedian."
;%| ["What's the difference?"
'til ^ "A big one. A comic opens funny doors. A comedian
S} opens doors funny."
'^||;.,' Rainger asked, "Did you ever stop to think what makes
;1| one comedian a smash and another one a failure?"
?H., "Material," Toby said, wanting to flatter them.
S^',, "Buffalo shit. The last new joke was invented by Aris- ^i toj^ianes.
Jokes are basically all the same. George Burns can
§fe .tell six jokes that the guy on the bill ahead of him just told,
t|||;^and Burns will get bigger laughs. Do you know why? Peril^;,:,
tonality." /(was what Clifton Lawrence had told him. "Withi(A|
out it, you're nothing, nobody. You start with a personality
'and you turn it into a character. Take Hope. If he came out
and did a Jack Benny monologue, he'd bomb. Why? Because
'he's built up a character. That's what the audiences expect
I^'1 from him When Hope walks out, they want to hear those
H rapid-fire jokes. He's a likeable smart-ass, the big city fellow
«ifc who gets his lumps. Jack Benny--just the opposite. He
wouldn't know what to do with a Bob Hope monologue, but
he can take a two-minute pause and make an audience scream.
Each of the Marx Brothers has his own character. Fred Alien
?i^' is unique. That brings us to you. Do you know your problem,
% Toby? You're a little of everybody. You're mutating all the
.;; big boys. Well, that's great if you want to play Elks smokers
^ for the rest of your life. But if you want to move up into the
?* big time, you've got to create a character of your own. When
I you're out on that stage, before you even open your mouth,
11*
the aiM- i,as to l^o^ th^ i1'5 Toby Temple up there. Do

youT^"
Yp1>
q|~' took over. "Do you know what you've got,

Toby) -anl0 ^,ie face. If I weren't already engaged to dark
Gable >~ " rf-azy about you. There's a naive sweetness about
you. I(/iackagc it right, it could be v/orth a fucking
fortune,^011 ">.
pothing of a fortune in fucking," Rainger
chimed.
"y11' get away with things that the other boys can't.
It's like u .-it)oy saying four-letter words -- it's cute because
you do^.iieve he really understands what he's saying.
When ^, t fted in here, you asked if we were the fellows
who w§ u -ng to write your Jokes. The answer is no. This
isn't a j e ^(.nD. What we are going to do is show you what
you've fc e s a h^ to use It' We're going to tailor a character
for you w 3LW what do you say?"
toi,, i/ed frcin one to the other, grinned happily and
said, "I - i] up OUI sleeves and go to work."

evr , ., s^ter that, Toby had lunch with O'HanIon and
Rainger I^ , ctU^10- 'Ths Twentieth Century-Fox commissary
was an at ^us room ^e^ v/It^ wall-to-wall stars. On any
given da no hV cou^ see Tyrone Power and Loretta Young
and Be» ^ab^ aa^ ^)on ^"^he and Alice Faye and
Richard ^,.,-,all< an^ Victor Mature and the Ritz Brothers,
and do^ ' ,. nthefs. Some were seated at tables in the large
room, q^ s °i,efs ^ i" Ac smaller executive dining room
which 9-,. .° j the main commissar)'. Toby loved watching
them all 'n short time, he would be one of them, people
would bp< n g for his autograph. He was on his way, and he
was going ^ ^ ^gET than any of them.

Ali^ ^er was thrilled by what was happening to
Toby. "^, , you're going to make it, darling. I'm so proud
of you."

Toby and O'Hanlon and Rainger had long discussions
out the new character Toby was to be.
"He should think he's a sophisticated man of the world,"
I'Hanlon said. "But every time he comes to bat, he lays an
if
"What's his job?" asked Rainger. "Mixing metaphors?"
"This character should live with his mother. He's in love
|ith a girl, but he's afraid to leave home to marry her. He's
i engaged to her for five years."
"Ten is a funnier number."
"Right! Make it ten years. His mother shouldn't happen
a dog. Every time Toby wants to get married, his mother
develops a new disease. Time Magazine calls her every week
to find out what's happening in medicine."
Toby sat there listening, fascinated by the fast flow of
dialogue. He had never worked with real professionals before,
and he enjoyed it. Particularly since he was the center of
3|'attention. It took O'Hanlon and Rainger three weeks to write
|^ sia act for Toby. When they finally showed it to him he was

H thrilled. It was good. He made a few suggestions, they added gted threw out some lines, and Toby Temple was ready. Clifton Lawrence sent for him.

"You're opening Saturday night at the Bowling Ball."

Toby stared at him. He had had expectations of being booked into Giro's or the Trocadero. "What's--what's the Bowling Ball?"

"A little club on south Western Avenue."

Toby's face fell. "I never heard of it."

"And they never heard of you. That's the point, dear boy. If you should bomb there, no one will ever know it."

Except Clifton Lawrence.

The Bowling Ball was a dump. There was no other word to describe it. It was a duplicate of ten thousand other 1|^ sleazy little bars scattered throughout the country, a watering hole for losers. Toby had played there a thousand times, in a thousand does. The patrons were mostly middle-aged males, blue-collar workers indulging in their ritual get-together with their buddies, ogling the tired waitresses in their tight skirts

and low-cut blouses, exchanging dirty jokes over a shot of cheap whiskey or a glass of beer. The floor show took place in a small cleared area at the far end of the room, where three bored musicians played. A homosexual singer opened the show, followed by an acrobatic dancer in a leotard, and then a stripper who worked with a somnolent cobra.

Toby sat at a table in the back of the room with Clifton Lawrence and O'Hanlon and Rainger, watching the other acts, listening to the audience, trying to gauge its mood.

"Beer drinkers," Toby said contemptuously.

Clifton started to retort, then looked at Toby's face aad checked himself. Toby was scared. Clifton knew that Toby had played places like this before, but this time was different. This was the test.

Clifton said gently, "If you can put the beer drinkers in your pocket, the champagne crowd will be a pushover. These people work hard all day, Toby. When they go out at night, they want their nickel's worth. If you can make them laugh, you can make anyone laugh."

At that moment, Toby heard the bored ME announce his name.

"Give 'em hell, tiger! " O'Hanlon said.

Toby was on.

He stood on the stage, on guard and tense, appraising the audience like a wary animal sniffing for danger in a forest. An audience was a beast with a hundred heads, each one different; and he had to make the beast laugh. He took a deep breath. Love me, he prayed.

He went into his act.

And no one was listening to him. No one was laughing.

Toby could feel the flop sweat begin to pop out on his forehead.

The act was not working. He kept his smile pasted on and
went on talking over the loud noise and conversation. He could
not get their attention. They wanted the naked broads back.
They had been exposed on too many Saturday nights to too
many talentless, unfunny comedians. Toby kept talking, in the
face of their indifference. He went on because there was noth-
I. ing else he could do. He looked out and saw Clifton Lawrence
.and the boys, watching him with worried expressions.
Toby continued. There was no audience in the room,
people, talking to one another, discussing their problems
their lives. For all they cared, Toby Temple could have
i a million miles away. Or dead. His throat was dry now
fear, and it was becoming hard to get the words out.
iftfom the corner of his eye, Toby saw the manager start
' ,^ward the bandstand. He was going to begin the music, pull
;','Hie plug on him. It was all over. Toby's palms were wet and
'- :Bos bowels had turned to water. He could feel hot urine trickle
'tlown his leg. He was so nervous that he was beginning to mix
tip his words. He did not dare look at Clifton Lawrence or the
writers. He was too filled with shame. The manager was at the
bandstand, talking to the musicians. They glanced over at Toby
and nodded. Toby went on, talking desperately, wanting it to
. "|be over, wanting to run away somewhere and hide.
^ A middle-aged woman seated at a table directly in front
^of Toby giggled at^one of his jokes. Her companions stopped
s|o listen. Toby kept talking, in a frenzy. The others at the
Stable were listening now, laughing. And then the next table.
A And the next. And, slowly, the talking began to die down.
,;';!They were listening to him. The laughs were starting to come,
'l|long and regular, and they were getting bigger, and building.
,%;And building. The people in the room had become an audience.
Ai&nd he had them. He fucking had them! It no longer mattered
S]a&at he was in a cheap saloon filled with beer-drinking slobs.
%3C?hat mattered was their laughter, and their love. It came out
^(t Toby in waves. First he had them laughing, then he had
fi^Svum screaming. They had never heard anything like him, not
^llfi this crummy place, not anywhere. They applauded and they
,i|i^tieered and before they were through, they damned near tore
t?;the place apart. They were witnessing the birth of a phenomejoon.
Of course, they could not know that. But Clifton Lawrence
^i-nd O'Hanlon and Rainger knew it. And Toby Temple knew it.
;& God had finally come through.

-S1'1

^ Reverend Damian shoved the blazing torch into Jose^jSffiine's
face and screamed, "0 God Almighty, burn away the
evil in this sinful child," and the congregation roared "Amen!"
And Josephine could feel the flame licking at her face and the
Reverend Damian yelled out, "Help this sinner exorcise the
Devil, 0 God. We will pray him out, we will burn him out,
we will drown him out," and hands grabbed Josephine, and
her face was suddenly plunged into a wooden tub of cold
water, and she was held under while voices chanted into the

night air, beseeching the Almighty One for His help, and
Josephine struggled to get loose, fighting for breath, and when
they finally pulled her out, half-conscious, the Reverend
Damian declared, "We thank you, sweet Jesus, for your mercy.
She is saved! She is saved!" And there was great rejoicing, and
everyone was raised in spirit. Except Josephine, whose headaches
became worse.

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10

"I've gotten you a booking in Las Vegas," Clifton Lawice
told Toby. "I've arranged for Dick Landry to work on
ur act. He's die best nightclub director in the business."
"Fantastic! Which hotel? The Flamingo? The Thunder-
d?"
"The Oasis."
"The Oasis)" Toby looked at Cliff to see if he was
ang. "I never --"
. "I know." Cliff smiled. "You never heard of it. Fair
enough. They never heard of you. They're really not booking
u--they're booking me. They're taking my word that
u're good."
"Don't worry," Toby promised. "I will be."

Toby broke the news to Alice Tanner about his Las
;gas booking just before he was to leave. "I know you're
jug to be a big star," she said. "It's your time. They'll
pre you, darling." She hugged him and said, "When do we
tvc, and what do I wear to the opening night of a young
mic genius?"
j, Toby shook his head ruefully. "I wish I could take you,
He. The trouble is I'll be working night and day thinking
a lot of new material."
She tried to conceal her disappointment. "I understand."
it held him tighter. "How long will you be gone?"
a "I don't know: yet. You see, it's kind of an open booking."
She felt a small stab of worry, but she knew that she was
being silly. "Call me the moment you can," she said.
Toby kissed her and danced out the door.

It was as mough Las Vegas, Nevada, had been created
for the sole pleasure of Toby Temple. He felt it the moment
he saw the town. It had a marvelous kinetic energy that he
responded to, a pulsating power that matched the power
burning inside him. Toby flew in with O'Hanlon and Rainger,
and when they arrived at the airport, a limousine from the
Oasis Hotel was waiting for them. It was Toby's first taste
of the wonderful world that was soon to be his. He enjoyed
leaning back in the huge car and having the chauffeur ask,
"Did you have a nice flight, Mr. Temple?"
// was always the little people who could smell a success

even before it happened, Toby thought.
"It was the usual bore," Toby said carelessly. He caught the smile that O'Hanlon and Rainger exchanged, and he gririTh'd back at them. He felt very close to them. They were all a fam, the best god damned team in show business.
The Oasis was off the glamorous Strip, far removed from the more famous hotels. As the limousine approached the hotel, Toby saw that it was not as large or as fancy as trie Flamingo or the Thunderbird, but it had something better, much better. It had a giant marquee in front that read:
OPENING SEPT. 4TH
LILI WALLACE
TOBY TEMPLE

Toby's name was in dazzling letters that seemed a hundred feet high. No sight was as beautiful as this in the whole god damned world.
"Look at that!" he said in awe.
O'Hanlon glanced at the sign and said, "Yeah! How about that? Lili Wallace!" And he laughed. "Don't worry, Toby. After the opening you'll be on top of her."
The manager of the Oasis, a middle-aged, sallow-faced man named Parker, greeted Toby and personally escorted him to his suite, fawning all the way. "I can't tell you how

pleased we are to have you with us, Mr. Temple. If there's a anything at all you need--anything--just give me a call."
!Sg The welcome, Toby realized, was for Clifton Lawrence.
'ISThis was die first time the fabulous agent had deigned to book s'lieoe of hi(> clients into this hotel. The manager of the Oasis ^Itoped that now the hotel would get some of Lawrence's fefcally big stars.
he The suite was enormous. It consisted of three bedrooms, IJifl, large living room, a kitchen, a bar and a terrace. On a table ilia the living room were bottles of assorted liquors, flowers lljland a large bowl of fresh fruit and cheeses, compliments of 'Sjlithe management.
llf-! "I hope this will be satisfactory, Mr. Temple," Parker Ulsaid.
&, Toby looked around and thought of all the dreary little "fecockroach-ridden fleabag hotel rooms he had h'i-;;d in. "Yeah. ""|fs okay."
"Mr. Landry checked in an hour ago. I've arranged to the Mirage Room for your rehearsal at three o'clock."
"Thanks."
"Remember, if there's anything at all you need --" And ie manager bowed himself out.
Toby stood there, savoring his surroundings. He was :g to live in places like this for the rest of his life. He Id have it all -- the broads, the money, the applause.
IBMostly the applause. People sitting out there laughing and

;g|jtheering and loving him. That was his food and drink. He
^did not need anything else.
IS1
'S^s- Dick Landry was in his late twenties, a slight, thin man
A^with an alopecian head and long, graceful legs. He had started
^aut as a gypsy on Broadway and had graduated from the
it'lpehorus to lead dancer to choreographer to director. Landry
'K'ihad taste and a sense of what an audience wanted. He could
rifAot make a bad act good, but he could make it look good,
'^VDd if he was given a good act, he could make it sensational.
^ Until ten days ago, Landry had never heard of Toby Temple,
3<i8nd the only reason Landry had cut into his frantic schedule
IJSBB come to Las Vegas and stage Temple's act was because

Toby dropped his spoon. "A thousand a week? That's
fantastic. Cliff!"
"And I've had a couple of feelers from the Thunderbird
and the El Rancho Hotel."
"Already?" Toby asked, elated.
"Don't wet your pants. It's just to play the lounge." He
smiled. "It's the old story, Toby. To me you're a headliner,
and to you you're a headliner -- but to a headliner, are you a
headliner?" He stood up. "I have to catch a plane to New
York. I'm flying to London tomorrow."
"London? When will you be back?"
"In a few weeks." Clifton leaned forward and said, "Listen
to me, dear boy. You have two more weeks here. Treat it
like a school. Every night you're up on that stage, I want you
to figure out how you can be better. I've persuaded O'Hanlon
and Rainger not to leave. They're willing to work with you
day and night. Use them. Landry will come back weekends
to see how everything is going."
"Right," Toby said. "Thanks, Cliff."
"Oh, I almost forgot," Clifton Lawrence said casually.
He pulled a small package from his pocket and handed it to
Toby.
Inside was a pair of beautiful diamond cufflinks. They
were in the shape of a star.

Whenever Toby had some free time, he relaxed around
the large swimming pool at the back of the hotel. There were
twenty-five girls in the show and there were always a dozen
or so from the chorus line in bathing suits, sunning themselves.
They appeared in the hot noon air like late-blooming
flowers, one more beautiful than the next. Toby had never
had trouble getting girls, but what happened to him now
was a totally new experience. The showgirls had never heard
of Toby Temple before, but his name was up in lights on the
marquee. That was enough. He was a Star, and they fought
each other for the privilege of going to bed with him.

The next two weeks were marvelous for Toby. He would
wake up around noon, have breakfast in the dining room

ere he was kept busy signing autographs and then rehearse
an hour or two. Afterward, he would pick one or two
the long-legged beauties around the pool and they would
up to his suite for an afternoon romp in bed.
And Toby learned something new. Because of the
mpy costumes the girls wore, they had to get rid of their
i)ic hair. But they waxed it in such a way that only a curly
ip of hair was left in the center of the mound, making the
:ning more available.
"It's like an aphrodisiac," one of the girls confided to
by. "A few hours in a pair of tight pants and a girl becomes
having nymphomaniac."
Toby did not bother to learn any of their names. They
re all "baby" or "honey", and they became a marvelous,
isuous blur of thighs and lips and eager bodies.
During the final week of Toby's engagement at the
sis, he had a visitor. Toby had finished the first show and
5 in his dressing room, creaming off his makeup, when
dining room captain opened the door and said in hushed
ies, "Mr. Al Caruso would like you to join his table."
Al Caruso was one of the big names in Las Vegas. He
ned one hotel outright, and it was rumored that he had
hts in two or three others. It was also rumored that he
i mob connections, bur that was no concern of Toby's.
iat was important was that if Al Caruso liked him, Toby
lid get bookings in Las Vegas for the rest of his life. He
rriedly finished dressing and went into the dining room to
et Caruso.
Al Caruso was a short man in his fifties with gray hair,
nkling, soft brown eyes and a little paunch. He reminded
by of a miniature Santa Claus. As Toby came up to the
Ie, Caruso rose, held out his hand, smiled warmly and
i, "Al Caruso. Just wanted to tell you what I think of
», Toby. Pull up a chair."
There were two other men at Caruso's table, dressed in
k suits. They were both burly, sipped Coca-Colas and did
t say a word during the entire meeting. Toby never learned
ir names. Toby usually had his dinner after the first show.
was ravenous now, but Caruso had obviously just finished

earing, and Toby did not want to appear to be more interested
in food than in his meeting with the great man.
"I'm impressed with you, kid," Caruso said. "Real impressed."
And he beamed at Toby with those mischievous
brown eyes.
"Thanks, Mr. Caruso," Toby said happily. "That means

a lot to me."
"Call me Al."
"Yes, sir--Al."
"You got a future, Toby. I've seen 'em come and I've
seen 'em go. But the ones with talent last a long time. You
got talent."
Toby could feel a pleasant warmth suffusing his body.
He fleetingly debated whether to tell Al Caruso to discuss
business with Clifton Lawrence; but Toby decided it might
be better if he made the deal himself. If Caruso is this excited
about me, Toby thought, I can make a better deal than Cliff.
Toby dedded he would let Al Caruso make the first offer
and then he would do some hard bargaining.
"I almost wet my pants," Caruso was telling him. "That
monkey routine of yours is the runniest thing I ever
heard."
"Coming from you, that's a real compliment," Toby
said with sincerity.
The little Santa Claus eyes were filled with tears of
laughter. He took out a white silk handkerchief and wiped
them away. He turned to his two escorts. "Did I say he's a
funny man?"
The two men nodded.
Al Caruso turned back to Toby. "Tell you why I came
to see you, Toby."
This was the magical moment, his entrance into the big
time. Clifton Lawrence was off in Europe somewhere, making
deals for has-been clients when he should have been here
making this deal. Well, Lawrence would have a real surprise
in store for him when he returned.
Toby leaned forward and said, smiling engagingly, "I'm
listening, Al."
"Millie loves you."

Toby blinked, sure that he had missed something. The
man was watching him, his eyes twinkling.
"I -- I'm sorry," Toby said, in confusion. "What did you
i"
Al Caruso smiled warmly. "Millie loves you. She told

Millie? Could that be Caruso's wife? His daughter? Toby
ted to speak, but Al Caruso interrupted.
"She's a great kid. I been keepin' her for three, four
»." He turned to the other two men. "Four years?"
They nodded.
Al Caruso turned back to Toby. "I love that girl, Toby.
really crazy about her."
Toby could feel the blood beginning to drain from his
t "Mr. Caruso--"
Al Caruso said, "Millie and me got a deal. I don't cheat
icr except with my wife, and she don't cheat on me unless

tdls me." He beamed at Toby, and this time Toby saw
ething beyond the cherubic smile that turned his blood
e.
"Mr. Caruso--"
"You know something', Toby? You're the first guy she
^cheated on me with." He turned to the two men at the
fc "Is that the honest truth?"
They nodded.
When Toby spoke, his voice was trembling. "I -- I swear
tod I didn't know Millie was your girlfriend. If I had even
wied it, I wouldn't have touched her. I wouldn't have
e within a mile of her, Mr. Caruso --"
The Santa Claus beamed at him. "Al. Call me Al."
t"Al." It came out as a croak. Toby could feel the per- ation running down
under his arms. "Look, Al," he said.
I-- I'll never see her again. Ever. Believe me, I --"
Caruso was staring at him. "Hey! I don't think you were
fang to me."
Toby swallowed. "Yes. Yes, I was. I heard every word
said. And you don't ever have to worry about --"
"I said the kid loves you. If she wants you, then I want
to have you. I want her to be happy. Understand?"
down Toby's back. But it was all right. Caruso was beaming
and saying, "You were great tonight, Toby, really great."
Toby began to relax. "It was a good audience."
Caruso's brown eyes twinkled and he said, "You made
them a good audience, Toby. I told you -- you got talent."
"Thanks, Al." He wished they would all leave, so he
could be on his way.
"You work hard," Al Caruso said. He turned to his
two lieutenants. "Did I say I never seen nobody work so
hard?"
The two men nodded.
Caruso turned back to Toby. "Hey--Millie was kinda
upset you didn't call her. I told her it was because you was
workin' so hard."
"That's right," Toby said quickly. "I'm glad you understand.
Al."
Al smiled benignly. "Sure. But you know what I don't
understand? You didn't call to find out what time the wedding
is."
"I was going to call in the morning."
Al Caruso laughed and said chidingly, "From L.A.?"
Toby felt a small pang of anxiety. "What are you talking
about, Al?"
Caruso regarded him reproachfully. "You got your suitcases
all packed in there." He pinched Toby's cheek playfully.
"I told you I'd kill anyone who hurt Millie."
"Wait a minute! Honest to God, I wasn't--"
"You're a good kid, but you're stupid, Toby. I guess
that's part of being' a genius, huh?"
Toby stared at the chubby, beaming countenance, not
knowing what to say.

"You gotta believe me," Al Caruso said warmly, "I'm
your friend. I wanna make sure nofhin' bad happens to you.
For Millie's sake. But if you won't listen to me, what can I
do? You know how you get a mule to pay attention?"
Toby shook his head dumbly.
"First, you hit it over the head with a two-by-four."
Toby felt fear rising in his throat.
"Which is your good arm?" Caruso asked.

'My -- my right one," Toby mumbled.
Caruso nodded genially and fumed to the two men. "Break
e said.
From out of nowhere, a tire iron appeared in the hands
ie of the men. The two of them began closing in on
. The river of fear became a sudden flood that made
hole body shake.
'For Christ's sake," Toby heard himself say, inanely.
can't do this."
One of the men hit him hard in the stomach. In the next
d, Toby felt excruciating pain as the tire iron slammed
st his right arm, shattering bones. He fell to the flooring in an unbearable
agony. He tried to scream, but he
1 not catch his breath. Through tear-filled eyes, he looked
ad saw Al Caruso standing over him, smiling.
"Have I got your attention?" Caruso asked softly.
Toby nodded, in torment.
"Good," Caruso said. He turned to one of the men.
;n up his pants."
The man leaned down and unzipped Toby's fly. He took
are iron and flicked out Toby's penis.
Caruso stood Acre a moment, looking down at it. "You're
ky man, Toby. You're really hung."
Toby was filled with a dread such as he had never known.
, God ... please ... don't... don't do it to me," he
sed.
"I wouldn't hurt you," Caruso told him "As long as
re good to Millie, you're my friend. If she ever tells me
did anything to hurt her--anything--you understand
" He nudged Toby's broken arm with &e toe of his shoe
Toby screamed aloud. "I'm glad we understand each
r," Caruso beamed. "The wedding is at one o'clock."
Caruso's voice was fading in and out as Toby felt himself
ring into unconsciousness. But he knew he had to hang on.
can't," he whimpered. "My arm..."
"Don't worry about that," AI Caruso said. "There's a doc
us way up to take care of you. He's gonna set your arm
give you some stuff so you won't feel no pain. The boys
be here tomorrow to pick you up. You be ready, huh?"
Toby lay there in a nightmare of agony, staring up at
Santa Claus's smiling face, unable to believe that any of this
was really happening. He saw Caruso's foot moving toward his

arm again.
"S -- sure," Toby moaned. "I'll be ready..."
And he lost consciousness.

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II

The wedding, a gala event, was held in the ballroom of
Morocco Hotel. It seemed that half of Las Vegas was
?. There were entertainers and owners from all the other
ds and showgirls and, in the center of it all, Al Caruso
i a couple dozen of his friends, quiet, conservatively dressed
», most of whom did not drink. There were lavish arrange- its of Sowers
everywhere, strolling musicians, a gargantuan
Eet and two fountains that flowed champagne. Al Caruso
taken care of everything.
Everyone sympathized with the groom, whose arm was
i cast as a result of an accidental fall down some stairs. But
f all commented on what a marvelous-looking couple the
Ie and groom made and what a wonderful wedding it was.
Toby had been in such a daze from the opiates that the
tor had given him that he had walked through the ceremony
ost oblivious to what was going on. Then, as the drugs
an to wear off and the pain began to take hold again, the
er and hate flooded back into him. He wanted to scream
to everyone in the room the unspeakable humiliation that
been forced upon him.
Toby turned to look at his bride across the room. He
embered Millie now. She was a pretty girl in her twenties,
x honey-blonde hair and a good figure. Toby recalled that
had laughed louder than the others at his stories and had
wed him around. Something else came back to him too.
I was one of the few who had refused to go to bed with
him, which had only served to whet Toby's appetite. It was
all coming back to him now.

"I'm crazy about you," he had said. "Don't you like me?"
"Of course I do," she had replied. "But I have a boyfriend."

Why hadn't he listened to her! Instead, he had coaxed
her up to his room for a drink and then had started telling her
funny stories. Millie was laughing so hard that she hardly
noticed what Toby was doing until he had her undressed and
in bed.
"Please, Toby,'' she had begged. "Don't. My boyfriend
will be angry."
"Forget about him. I'll take care of the jerk later," Toby
had said. "I'm going to take care of you, now."
They had had a wild night of lovemaking. In the morning,
when Toby had awakened, Millie was lying beside him, crying.
In a benevolent mood, Toby had taken her in his arms and
said, "Hey, baby, what's the matter? Didn't you enjoy it?"

"You know I did. But--"
"Come on, stop that," Toby had said. "I love you."
She had propped herself up on her elbows, looked into
his eyes and said, "Do you really, Toby? I mean reallyV
"Damned right I do." All she needed was what he would
give her right now. It proved to be a real cheerer-upper.
She had watched him return from the shower, toweling
his still wet hair and humming snatches of his theme song.
Happy, she had smiled and said, "I think I loved you from
the first moment I saw you, Toby."
"Hey, that's wonderful. Let's order breakfast."
And that had been the end of that.... Until now. Because
of a stupid broad he had fucked only one night, his whole life
was turned topsyturvy.
Now, Toby stood there, watching Millie coming toward
him in her long, white wedding gown, smiling at him, and
he cursed himself and he cursed his cock and he cursed the
day he was born.

In the limousine, the man in die front seat chuckled and

aid admiringly, "I sure gotta hand it to you, boss. The poor
astard never knew what hit him."
Caruso smiled benignly. It had worked out well. Ever
Ince his wife, who had the temper of a virago, had found out
bout his affair with Millie, Caruso had known that he would
ave to find a way to get rid of the blonde showgirl.
"Remind me to see that he treats Millie good," Caruso
lid softly.

Toby and Millie moved into a small home in Benedict
;anyon. In the beginning, Toby spent hours scheming about
ays to get out of his marriage. He would make Millie so
liserable that she would ask for a divorce. Or he would frame
er with another guy and then demand a divorce. Or he would
mply leave her and defy Caruso to do something about it.
ut he changed his mind after a talk with Dick Landry, the
[rector.
They were having lunch at the Bel Air Hotel a few weeks
'ler the wedding, and Landry asked, "How well do you really
now AI Caruso?"
Toby looked at him. "Why ? "
"Don't get mixed up with him, Toby. He's a killer. I'll
II you something I know for a fact. Caruso's kid brother
tarried a nineteen-year-old girl fresh out of a convent. A
sas later, the kid caught his wife in bed with some guy. He
ild Al about it."
Toby was listening, his eyes fastened on Landry. "What
ippened?"
"Caruso's goons took a meat cleaver and cut off the guy's
ack. They soaked it in gasoline and set it on fire while the
?y watched. Then they left him to bleed to death."

Toby remembered Caruso saying. Open up his pants, and
we hard hands fumbling ^ his ripper, and Toby broke out in
cold sweat. He felt suddenly sick to his stomach. He knew
w with an awful certainty that there was no escape.

Josephine found an escape when she was ten. It was a
wr to another world where she could hide from her mother's
mishment and the constant threat of HeU-fire and Damnation.

/(was a world filled with magic and beauty. She would
sit in the darkened movie house hour after hour and watch the
glamorous people on the screen. They all lived in beautiful
houses and wore lovely clothes, and they were all so happy.
And Josephine thought, I will go to Hollywood, one day and
live like that. She hoped that her mother would understand.
Her mother believed that movies were the thoughts of
the Devil, so Josephine had to sneak away to the theater, using money she
earned by baby-sitting. The picture that was playing
today was a love story, and Josephine leaned forward in
joyous anticipation as it began. The credits came on first. They
read, "Produced by Sam Winters".

100

There were days when Sam Winters felt as though he
sre running a lunatic asylum instead of a motion-picture
idio, and that all the inmates were out to get him. This
is one of those days, for the crises were piled a foot high.
here had been another fire at the studio the night before--
e fourth; the sponsor of "My Man Friday" had been insulted
the star of the series and wanted to cancel the show; Bert
rcstone, the studio's boy-genius director, had shut down
eduction in the middle of a five-million-dollar picture; and
ssie Brand had walked out on a picture that was scheduled
start shooting in a few days.
k/ The fire marshal and the studio comptroller were in Sam's
ice
"How bad was last night's fire?" Sam asked.
The comptroller said, "The sets are a total loss, Mr.
jmters. We're going to have to rebuild Stage Fifteen cometely.
Sixteen is fixable, but it will take us three months."
"We haven't got three months," Sam snapped. "Get on
e phone and rent some space at Goldwyn. Use this weekend
start building new sets. Get everybody moving."
He turned to the fire marshal, a man named Reilly, who
minded Sam of George Bancroft, the actor.
"Somebody sure as hell don't like you, Mr. Winters,"
ally said. "Each fire has been a dear case of arson. Have
|l checked on grunts?"
Grunts were disgruntled employees who had been recently
cd or felt they had a grievance against their empbyer.
"We've gone through all the personnel files twice," Sam
replied. "We haven't come up with a thing."

"Whoever is setting these babies knows exactly what he's
doing. He's using a tuning device attached to a homemade
incendiary. He could be an electrician or a mechanic."
"Thanks," Sam said. "I'll pass that on."

"Roger Tapp is calling from Tahiti."
"Put him on," Sam said. Tapp was the producer of "My
Man Friday", the television series being shot in Tahiti, starring
Tony Fletcher.
"What's the problem?" Sam asked.
"You won't fucking believe this, Sam. Philip Heller, the
chairman of the board of the company that's sponsoring the
show, is visiting here with his family. They walked on the set
yesterday afternoon, and Tony Fletcher was in the middle of a
scene. He turned to them and insulted them."
"What did he say?"
"He told them to get off his island."
"Jesus Christ!"
"That's who he thinks he is. Heller's so mad he wants to
cancel the series."
"Get over to Heller and apologize. Do it right now. Tell
him Tony Fletcher's having a nervous breakdown. Send Mrs.
Heller flowers, take them to dinner. I'll talk to Tony Fletcher
myself."

The conversation lasted thirty minutes. It began with Sam
saying, "Hear this, you stupid cock sucker ..." and ended with,
"I love you, too, baby. I'll fly over there to see you as soon as
I can get away. And for God's sake, Tony, don't lay Mrs.
Heller!"

The next problem was Bert Firestone, the boy-genius
director who was breaking Pan-Pacific Studios. Firestone's
picture, There's Always Tomorrow, had been shooting for a
hundred and ten days, and was more than a million dollars
over budget. Now Bert Firestone had shut the production
down, which meant that, besides the stars, there were a

hundred and fifty extras sitting around on their asses doing
nothing. Bert Firestone. A thirty-year-old whiz kid who came
from directing prize-winning television shows at a Chicago
station to directing movies in Hollywood. Firestone's first three
'motion pictures had been mild successes, but his fourth one
.had been a box-office smash. On the basis of that money|maker, he had become
a hot property. Sam remembered his
first meeting with him. Firestone looked a not-yetready-to- shave fifteen. He
was a pale, shy man with black horned-rimmed
glasses that concealed tiny, myopic pink eyes. Sam had felt
} sorry for the kid. Firestone had not known anyone in Holly-
;wood, so Sam had gone out of his way to have him to dinner
i and to see that he was invited to parties. When they had first

Jdiscussed There's Always Tomorrow, Firestone was very
Srespectful. He told Sam that he was eager to learn. He hung
'on every word that Sam said. He could not have agreed more
Jwith Sam. If he were signed for this picture, he told Sam, he
jwould certainly lean heavily on Mr. Winters's expertise.
t That was before Firestone signed the contract. After he
laigned it, he made Adolf Hitler look like Albert Schweitzer.
|The little apple-cheeked kid turned into a killer overnight.
||Ke cut off all communication. He completely ignored Sam's
toasting suggestions, insisted on totally rewriting a fine script
|tfaat Sam had approved, and he changed most of the shooting
|tocales that had already been agreed upon. Sam had wanted
|o throw him off the picture, but the New York office had told
I Bo-- .„ ^ patient. Rudolph Hergershorn, the president of
ipany, was hypnotized by the enormous grosses on
le's last movie. So Sam had been forced to sit tight
nothing. It seemed to him that Firestone's arrogance
ly by day. He would sit quietly through a production
, and when all the experienced department heads had
speaking, Firestone would begin chopping down everyn
gritted his teeth and bore it. In no time at all. Firequired
the nickname of the Emperor, and when his
rs were not calling him that, they referred to him as
ck from Chicago. Somebody said about him, "He's a
irodite. He t»uld probably fuck himself and give birth
-headed monster."
l^cm, in the middle of shooting, Fircstone had closed
down the company.
Sam went over to see Devlin Kelly, the head of the art
department. "Give it to me fast," Sam said.
"Right. Kid Prick ordered --"
"Cut that out. It's Mr. Firestone."
"Sorry. Mr. Firestone asked me to build a castle set for
him. He drew the sketches himself. You okayed them."
"They were good. What happened ? "
"What happened was that we built him exactly what the
little -- what he wanted, and when he took a look at it yesterday,
he decided he didn't want it anymore. A half-million
bucks down the --"
"I'll talk to him," Sam said.

Bert Firestone was outside, in back of Stage Twentythree,
playing basketball with the crew. They had rigged up
a court and had painted in boundary lines and put up two
baskets.
Sam stood there, watching a moment. The game was
costing the studio two thousand dollars an hour. "Bert!"
Firestone turned, saw Sam, smiled and waved. The ball
came to him, he dribbled it, feinted, and sank a basket. Then
he strolled over to Sam. "How are things?" As though nothing
were wrong.
As Sam looked at the boyish, smiling young face, it
occurred to him that Bert Firestone was a psycho. Talented,

maybe even a genius, but a certifiable lunatic. And five million
dollars of the company's money was in his hands.
"I hear there's a problem with the new set," Sam said. "Let's straighten it out."
Bert Firestone smiled lazily and said, "There's nothing
to straighten out, Sam. The set won't work."
Sam exploded. "What the hell are you talking about?
We gave you exactly what you ordered. You did the sketches
yourself. Now you tell me what's wrong with it!"
Firestone looked at him and blinked. "Why, there's
nothing wrong with it. It's just that I've changed my mind.
I don't want a castle. I've decided that's not the right ambience.

Do you know what I mean? Tins is Ellen and Mike's farewell
gcene. I'd like to have Ellen come to visit Mike on the deck
<rfhis ship as he's getting ready to sail."
% ~ Sam stared at him. "We don't have a ship set, Bert."
; Bert Firestone stretched his arms and smiled lazily and
|»aid, "Build one for me, Sam."
{;*
"Sure, I'm pissed off, too," Rudolph Hergershom said,
^ver the long-distance line, "but you can't replace him, Sam.
We'te in too deep now. We have no stars in the picture. Bert
Firestone's our star."
^ "Do you know how far over the budget he's -- ?"
["I know. And like Goldwyn said, 'I'll never use the son
af a bitch again, until I need him.' We need him to finish this
Icture."
F1" "It's a mistake," Sam argued. "He shouldn't be allowed
||0 get away with this."
r "Sam -- do you like the stuff Firestone has shot so far?"
s Sam had to be honest. "It's great."
f' "Build him his ship."
^The set was ready in ten days, and Bert Firestone put
There's Always Tomorrow company back into production.
umed out to be the top grosser of the year.

(; The next problem was Tessie Brand.
' Tessie was the hottest singer in show business. It had
been a coup when Sam Winters had managed to sign her to
<t three-picture deal at Pan-Pacific Studios. While the other
Itudios were negotiating with Tessie's agents, Sam had quietly
town to New York, seen Tessie's show and taken her out to
topper afterward. The supper had lasted until seven o'clock
the following morning.
Tessie Brand was one of the ugliest girls Sam had ever
Seen, and probably the most talented. It was the talent that
won out. The daughter of a Brooklyn tailor, Tessie had never
had a singing lesson in her life. But when she walked onto a
stage and began belting out a song in a voice that rocked the
rafters, audiences went wild. Tessie had been an understudy

in a flop Broadway musical that had lasted only six weeks.
On closing night, the ingenue made the mistake of phoning in sick and staying home. Tessie Brand made her debut that evening, singing her heart out to the sprinkling of people in the audience. Among them happened to be Paul Varrick, a Broadway producer. He starred Tessie in his next musical.
She turned the show, which was fair, into a smash. The critics ran out of superlatives trying to describe the incredible, ugly Tessie and her amazing voice. She recorded her first single record. Overnight it became number one. She did an album, and it sold two million copies in the first month. She was Queen Midas, for everything she touched turned to gold.
Broadway producers and record companies were making their fortunes with Tessie Brand, and Hollywood wanted in on the action. Their enthusiasm dimmed when they got a look at Tessie's face, but her box-office figures gave her an irresistible beauty.
After spendiag five minutes with her, Sam knew how he was going to haadle her.
"What makes me nervous," Tessie confessed to Sam the first night they met, "is how I'm gonna look on that great big scree". I'm ugly enough life-sized, right? All the-studios tell are ihey can make me look beautiful, but I think that's a load of horse shit."
"It is a load of horse shit," Sam said. Tessie looked at him in surprise. "Don't let anyone try to change you, Tessie. They'll ruin you."
"Yeah?"
"When MGM signed Danny Thomas, Louie Mayer wanted him to get a nose job. Instead, Danny quit the studio. He knew that what he had to sell was himself. That's'v/hat you have to sell -- Tessie Brand, not some plastic stranger up there."
"You're the first one who's leveled with me," Tessie said. "You're a real Mensch. You married?"
"No," Sam said.
"Do you fool around?"
jam laughed. "Never with singers -- I have no ear."
"You wouldn't need an ear." Tessie smiled. "I like you."

"Do you like me well enough to make some movies with (.me?"
She looked at him and said, "Yeah."
"Wonderful. I'll work out the deal with your agent."
She stroked Sam's hand and said, "Are you sure you n't fool around?"

Tessie Brand's first two pictures went through the box§|office roof. She received an Academy nomination for the first gone and was awarded the golden Oscar for the second.
^Audiences all over the world lined up at motion-picture

I'tfaeaters to see Tessie and to hear that incredible voice. She
|had everything. She was funny, she could sing and she could
pet. Her ugliness turned out to be an asset, because audiences
I'identified with it. Tessie Brand became a surrogate for all the
|unattractive, the unloved, the unwanted.
I' Tessie married the leading man in her first picture,
iMivorced him after the retakes and married the leading man
gin her next picture. Sam had heard rumors that this marriage
|t0o was sinking, but Hollywood was a hotbed of gossip. He
I'gaid no attention, for he felt that it was none of his business.
As it turned our, he was mistaken.

Sam was talking on the phone to Barry Herman, Tessie's
nt. "What's the problem, Barry?"
"Tessie's new picture. She's not happy, Sam.''
Sam felt his temper rising. "Hold it! Tessie approved
; producer, the director and the shooting script. We've got ; sets built and
we're ready to roll. There's no way she can
1k away now. I'll --"
|y; "She doesn't want to walk away."
' Sam was taken aback. "What the hell does she want?"
"She wants a new producer on the picture."
Sam yelled into the phone. "She what?"
H "Ralph Dastin doesn't understand her."
"Dastin's one of the best producers in the business. She's
<y to have him."
"I couldn't agree with you more, Sam. But the chemy's
wrong. She won't make the picture unless he's out."
"She's got a contract, Barry."
"I know that, sweetheart. And, believe me, Tessie has
every intention of honoring it. As long as she's physically able.
It's just that she gets nervous when she's unhappy and she
can't seem to remember her lines."
"I'll call you back," Sam said savagely. He slammed down
the phone.
The god damned bitch! There was no reason to fire
Dasrin from the picture. He had probably refused to go to
bed with her, or something equally ridiculous. He said to
Ludlle, "Ask Ralph Dastin to come up here."
Ralph Dastin was an amiable man in his fifties. He had
started as a writer and had eventually become a producer.
His movies had taste and charm.
"Ralph," Sam began, "I don't know how to --"
Dastin held up his hand. "You don't have to say it, Sam.
I was on my way up here to tell you I'm quitting."
"What the hell's going on?" Sam demanded.
Dastin shrugged. "Our star's got an itch. She wants someone
else to scratch it."
"You mean she has your replacement already picked
out?"
"Jesus, where have you been -- on Mars? Don't you read
the gossip columns?"
"Not if I can help it. Who is he?"

"It's not a he."
Sam sat down, slowly. "What?"
"It's the costume designer on Tessie's picture. Her ..name
is Barbara Carter -- like the little liver pills."
"Are you sure about this?" Sam asked.
"You're the only one in the entire Western Hemisphere
who doesn't know it."
Sam shook his head. "I always thought Tessie was
straight."
"Sam, life's a cafeteria. Tessie's a hungry girl."
"Well, I'm not about to put a god damned female costume
designer in chargeof a four-million-dollar picture."
Dastin grinned. "You just said the wrong thing."
"What does that mean?"

"It means that part of Tessie's pitch is that women aren't
given a fair chance in this business. Your little star has become
very feminist-minded."
; "I won't do it," Sam said.
; "Suit'yourself. But I'll give you some free advice. It's
pie only way you're ever going to get this picture made."

; Sam telephoned Barry Herman. "Tell Tessie that Ralph
toasrin walked off Ae picture," Sam said.
(; "She'll be pleased to hear that."
i Sam gritted his teeth, then asked, "Did she have anyone
;else in mind to produce the picture?"
"As a matter of fact, she did," Herman said smoothly.
."Tessie has discovered a very talented young girl who she
>feels is ready for a challenge like this. Under the guidance of
''someone as brilliant as you, Sam --"
"Cut out the commercial," Sam said. "Is that the bottom
dine?"
"I'm afraid it is, Sam. I'm sorry."

Barbara Carter had a pretty face and a good figure and,
as far as Sam could tell, was completely feminine. He watched
Bier as she took a seat on the leather couch in his office and
daintily crossed her long, shapely legs. When she spoke, her
Voice sounded a trifle husky, but that may have been because
Sam was looking for some kind of sign. She studied him with
igoft gray eyes and said, "I seem to be in a terrible spot, Mr.
Winters. I had no intention of putting anyone out of work.
And yet" -- she raised her hands helplessly -- "Miss Brand
says she simply won't make the picture unless I produce it.
What do you think I should do?"
For an instant, Sam was tempted to tell her. Instead, he
said, "Have you had any experience with show business--
(besides being a costume designer?"
"I've ushered, and I've seen lots of movies."
Terrific! "What makes Miss Brand think you can produce
a motion picture?"

It was as though Sam had touched a hidden spring.
Barbara Carter was suddenly full of animation. "Tessie and I

have talked a lor about this picture." No more "Miss Brand", Sam noticed. "I feel there are a lot of things wrong with the script, and when I pointed them out to her, she agreed with me."
"Do you think you know more about writing a script than an Academy Award-winning writer who's done half a dozen successful picturts and Broadway plays?"
"Oh, no, Mr. Winters! I just think I know more about women." The gray eyes were harder now, the tone a little tougher. "Don't you think it's ridiculous for men to always be writing women's parts? Only we really know how we feel. Doesn't that make sense to you?"
Sam was tired of the game. He knew he was going to hire her, and he hated himself for it, but he was running a studio, and his job was to see that pictures got made. If Tessie Brand wanted her pet squirrel to produce this picture, Sam would start ordering nuts. A Tessie Brand picture could easily mean a profit of from twenty to thirty million dollars. Besides, Barbara Carter couldn't do anything to really hurt the picture. Not now. It was too close to shooting for any major changes to be made.
"You've convinced me," Sam said, with irony. "You've got the job. Congratulations."

The following morning, the Hollywood Reporter and Variety announced on their front pages that Barbara Carter was producing the new Tcssie Brand movie. As Sam started to throw the papers in his wastebasket, a small item at the bottom of the page caught his eye: "toby temple signed for lounge at tahoe hotel."
Toby Temple. Sam remembered the eager young comic in uniform, and the memory brought a smile to Sam's face. Sam made a mental note to see his act if Temple ever played in town.
He wondered why Toby Temple had never gotten in touch with him.

13

In a strange way, it was Millie who was responsible for "oby Temple's rise to stardom. Before their marriage, he ad been just another up-and-coming comic, one of dozens. ince the wedding, a new ingredient had been added: hatred. "oby had been forced into a marriage with a girl he despised, nd there was such rage in him that he could have killed her 'ith his bare hands.
Although Toby did not realize it, Millie was a wonderful, evoted wife. She adored him and did everything she could to lease him. She decorated the house in Benedict Canyon, and

id it beautifully. But the more Millie tried to please Toby,
;ie more he loathed her. He was always meticulously polite toer, careful
never to do or say anything that might upset her
enough to call Al Caruso. As long as he lived, Toby would not
Mget the awful agony of that tire iron smashing into his arm,
r the look on Al Caruso's face when he said, "If you ever
urt Millie..."
v.
,' Because Toby could not take out his aggressions on his
Rife, he turned his fury on his audiences. Anyone who rattled
dish, or rose to go to the washroom or dared to talk while
^oby was on stage was the instant object of a savage tirade.
jOby dealt it with such wide-eyed, naive charm that the
^diences adored it, and when Toby ripped apart some hapless
ictim, people laughed until they cried. The combination of
gg innocent, guileless face and his wicked, funny tongue made
tai irresistible. He could say the most outrageous things and
get away with them. It became a mark of distinction to be
singled out for a tongue lashing by Toby Temple. It never
even occurred to his victims that Toby meant every word he
said. Where before Toby had been just another promising
young comedian, now he became the talk of the entertainment
circuit.
When Clifton Lawrence returned from Europe, he was
amazed to learn that Toby had married a showgirl. It had
seemed out of character, but when he asked Toby about it,
Toby looked him in the eye and said, "What's there to tell,
Cliff? I met Millie, fell in love with her and that was that."
Somehow, it had not rung true. And there was something
else that puzzled the agent. One day in his office, Clifton told
Toby, "You're really getting hot. I've booked you into the
Thunderbird for a four-week gig. Two thousand a week."
"What about that tour?"
"Forget it. Las Vegas pays ten times as much, and everybody
will see your act."
"Cancel Vegas. Get me the tour."
Clifton looked at him in surprise. "But Las Vegas is --"
"Get me the tour." There was a note in Toby's voice
that Clifton Lawrence had never heard before. It was not
arrogance or temperament; it was something beyond that,
a deep, controlled rage.
What made it frightening was that it emanated from a
face that had grown more genial and boyish than ever.

From that time on, Toby was on the road constantly.
It was his only escape from his prison. He played nightclubs
and theaters and auditoriums, and when those bookings ran
out, he badgered Clifton Lawrence to book him into colleges.
Anywhere, to get away from Millie.
The opportunities to go to bed with eager, attractive
women were limitless. It was the same in every town. They
waited in Toby's dressing room before and after the show
and waylaid him in his hotel lobby.

Toby went to bed with none of them. He thought of the
man's penis being hacked off and set on fire and Al Caruso

saying to Toby, You're really hung... I wouldn't hurt you.
You're my friend. As long as you're good to Millie ...
And Toby turned all the women away.
"I'm in love with my wife," he would say shyly. And they
believed him and admired him for it, and the word spread,
as Toby meant it to spread: Toby Temple did not fool around;
he was a real family man.
But the lovely, nubile young girls kept coming after him,
and the more Toby refused, the more they wanted him. And
Toby was so hungry for a woman that he was in constant
physical pain. His groin ached so much that sometimes it was
difficult for him to work. He started to masturbate again. Each
time he did, he thought of all the beautiful girls waiting to go
to bed with him, and he cursed and raged against fate.
Because Toby could not have it, sex was on his mind
all the time. Whenever he returned home after a tour, Millie
was waiting for him, eager and loving and ready. And the
moment Toby saw her, all his sexual desire drained away.
She was the enemy, and Toby despised her for what she was
doing to him. He forced himself to go to bed with her, but it
was Al Caruso he was satisfying. Whenever Toby took Millie,
it was with a savage brutality that forced gasps of pain from
her. He pretended that he thought they were sounds of
pleasure, and he pounded into her harder and harder, undl
finally he came in an explosion of fury that poured his venomous
semen into her. He was not making love.
He was making hate.

In June, 1950, the North Koreans moved across the
38th Parallel and attacked the South Koreans, and President
Truman ordered United States troops in. No matter what the
rest of the world thought about it, to Toby the Korean War
was the best thing that ever happened.
In early December, there was an announcement in Daily
Variety that Bob Hope was getting ready to make a Christmas
tour to entertain the troops in Seoul. Thirty seconds after he
"What for? You're almost thirty years old. Believe me,
dear boy, those tours are no fun. I --"
"I don't give a damn whether they're fun or not," Toby
shouted into the phone. "Those soldiers are out there risking
their lives. The least I can do is give them a few laughs."
It was a side of Toby Temple that Clifton had not seen
before. He was touched and pleased.
"Okay. If you feel that strongly about it, I'll see what I
can do," Clifton promised.
An hour later he called Toby back. "I talked to Bob.
He'd be happy to have you. But if you should change your
mind --"

"No chance," Toby said, hanging up.
Clifton Lawrence sat there a long rime, thinking about
Toby. He was very proud of him. Toby was a wonderful
human being, and Clifton Lawrence was delighted to be his
agent, delighted to be the man helping to shape his growing
career.

Toby played Taegu and Pusan and Chonju, and he found
solace in the laughter of the soldiers. Millie faded into the
background of his mind.
Then Christmas was over. Instead of returning home,
Toby went to Guam. The boys there loved him. He went to
Tokyo and entertained the wounded in the army hospital. But
finally, it was time to return home.

In April, when Toby came back from a ten-week tour
in the Midwest, Millie was waiting at the airport for him. Her
first words were, "Darling -- I'm going to have a baby! "
He stared at her, stunned. She mistook his expression for
happiness.
"Isn't it wonderful?" she exclaimed. "Now, .when you're
away, I'll have the baby to keep me company. I hope it's a
boy so that you can take him to baseball games and ..."
Toby did not hear the rest of the stupidities she was
mouthing. It was as though her words were being filtered from
far away. Somewhere in the back of his mind, Toby had
believed that someday, somehow, there would be an escape

for him. They had been married two years, and it seemed like
an eternity. Now this. Millie would never let him go.
; Never.

i The baby was due around Christmas time. Toby had
i made arrangements to go to Guam with a troupe of enter[tainers,
but he had no idea whether Al Caruso would approve
;of his being away while Millie was having the baby. There was
''only one way to find out. Toby called Las Vegas.
' Caruso's cheerful, familiar voice came on the line immediately
and said, "Hi, kid. Good to hear your voice."
"It's good to hear yours, Al."
"I hear you're gonna be a father. You must be real
; excited."
"Excited isn't the word for it," Toby said truthfully.
He let his voice take on a note of careful concern. "Th".' '&
;the reason I'm calling you, Al. The baby's going to be born
around Christmas, and--" He had to be very careful. "I
don't know what to do. I want to be here with Millie when the
;tdd's born, but they asked me to go back to Korea and Guam
'to entertain the troops."
There was a long pause. "That's a tough spot."
"I don't want to let our boys down, but I don't want to

kt Millie down, either."
1 "Yeah." There was another pause. Then, "I'll tell you 'what I think, kid. We're all good Americans, right? Those kids are out there fighting for us, right?"
Toby felt his body suddenly relax. "Sure. But I hate to--"
- "Millie'11 be okay," Caruso said. "Women have been jhavin' babies a hell of a long time. You go to Korea."

| Six weeks later, on Christmas Eve, as Toby walked off |a stage to thunderous applause at the army post in Pusan, he |was handed a cable, informing him that Millie had died while Igiving birth to a stillborn son.

"Marco! " she called out.
There was a chorus of "Po!o!" Josephine made a dive for the nearest voice. She felt around in the water. There was no one there.
"Marco!" she called.
Again, a chorus of "Polo!" She made a blind grab but reached only thin air. It did not matter to Josephine that they were faster than she; she wanted this game to go on forever, as she wanted this day to last until eternity.
She stood still, straining to hear a splash, a giggle, a whisper. She moved around in the pool, eyes closed, hands outstretched, and reached the steps. She took a step up to quiet the sound of her own movements.
"Marco! " she called out.
Ar.J there was no answer. She stood there, still.
"Marco!"
Sil'nce. It was as though she were in a warm, wet deserted v.-orld, nione. They were playing a trick on her. They had decided that no one would answer her. Josephine smiled and opened her eyes.
She was alone on the pool steps. Something made her look down. The bottom of her white bathing suit was stained with red, and there was a thin trickle of blood coming from between her thighs. The children were all standing on the sides of the pool, staring at her. Josephine looked up at them, stricken. "I -- " She stopped, not knowing what to say. She quickly moved down the steps into the water, to cover her shame.
"We don't do that in the swimming pool," Mary Lou said.
"Polacks do," someone giggled.
"Hey, let's go take a shower."
"Yeah. I feel icky."
"Who wants to swim in than"
Josephine closed her eyes again and heard them all moving toward the poolhouse, leaving her. She stayed there, keeping her eyes squeezed closed, pressing her legs together to try to stop the shameful flow. She had never had her period before. It had been totally unexpected. They would all come

,back m a moment and tell her that they had only been teasing, that they were still her friends, that the happiness would lever stop. They would return and explain that it was all a rame. Perhaps they were back already ready to play. Eyes ightly shut, she whispered, "Marco", and the echo died on fae afternoon air. She had no idea how long she stood there n the water with her eyes closed.

We don't do that in the swimming pool.

Polacks do.

Her head had begun pounding violently. She felt Inauseous, and her stomach was suddenly cramping. But Ijosephine knew that she must keep standing there with her fycs tightly shut. Just until they returned and told her it was j? Joke.

^ She heard footsteps -and a rustling sound above her and |she suddenly knew that everything was all right. They had , jcome back. She opened her eyes and looked up.

David, Mary Lou's older brother, was standing at the ;|iide of the pool, a terrycloth robe in his hands.

?' "I apologize for all of them," he said, his voice tight. lie fasld out the robe. "Here. Come out and put this on."

^ But Josephine closed her eyes and stayed there, rigid.

She wanted to die as quickly as possible.

It was one of Sam Winters's good days. The rushes on the Tessie Brand picture were wonderful. Part of the reason, of course, was that Tessie was breaking her neck to vindicate her behavior. But whatever the reason, Barbara Carter was going to emerge as the hottest new producer of the year. It was going to be a terrific year for costume designers.

The television shows produced by Pan-Padfic were doing well, and "My Man Friday" was the biggest of them all. The network was talking to Sam about a new five-year contract for the series.

Sam was preparing to leave for lunch when Lucille hurried in and said, "They just caught someone setting a fire in the prop department. They're bringing him over here now."

' The man sat in a chair facing Sam in silence, two studio guards standing behind him. His eyes were bright with malice. Sam had still not gotten over his shock. "Why?" he asked. "For God's sake -- why?"

"Because I didn't want your fucking charity," Dallas Burke said. "I hate you and this studio and the whole rotten business. I built this business, you son of a bitch. I paid for half the studios in this lousy town. Everybody got rich off me. Why didn't you give me a picture to direct instead of trying to pay me off by pretending to buy a bunch of fucking stolen fairy tales? You would have bought the phone book from me, Sam. I didn't want any favors from you -- I wanted)b. You're making me die a failure, you prick, and I'll

er forgive you for that."
Long after they had taken Dallas Burke away, Sam. sat
•e thinking about him, remembering the great things
las bad done, the wonderful movies he had made. In any
ar business, he would have been a hero, the chairman of
board or would have been retired with a nice, fat pension
Story.
But this was the wonderful world of show business.
i6

In the early 1950s, Toby Temple's success was growing.
He played the top nightclubs -- the Chez Paree in Chicago,
the Latin Casino in Philadelphia, the Copacabana in New
York. He played benefits and children's hospitals and charity
affairs -- he would play for anybody, anywhere, at any time.
The audience was his lifeblpod. He needed the applause and
the love. He was totally absorbed in show business. Major
events were occurring around the world, but to Toby they
were merely grist for his act.
In 1951, when General MacArthur was fired and said,
"Old soldiers don't die--they just fade away," Toby said,
"Jesus -- we must use the same laundry."
In 1952, when the hydrogen bomb was dropped, Toby's
response was, "That's nothing. You should have caught my
opening in Atlanta."
When Nixon made his "Checkers" speech, Toby said,
"I'd vote for him in a minute. Not Nixon -- Checkers."
Ike was President and Stalin died and young America
was wearing Davy Crockett hats and there was a bus boycott
in Montgomery. '
And everything was material for Toby's act.
When he delivered his zingers with that wide-eyed look
of baffled innocence, the audiences screamed.
Toby's whole life consisted of punch lines. "... so he
said, 'Wait a minute; I'll get my hat and go with you ...' "
and ".. . to tell the truth, it looked so good I ate it myself! "
and "... it's a candystore, but they'll call me ..." and

would have been a Shamus .. ." and "... now I've
you and there's no ship.. ." and "Just my luck. I get the
: that eats ..." and on and on, with the audiences laughing |
itil they cried. His audiences loved him, and he fed on their j
re and battened ,on it and climbed ever higher.
But there was a deep, wild restlessness in Toby. He was |
jtlways looking for something more. He could never enjoy J
ttimself because he was afraid he might be missing a better j
jparty somewhere, or playing to a better audience, or kissing
i^. prettier girl. He changed girls as frequently as he changed
|his shirts. After the experience with Millie, he was afraid to
Ibecome deeply involved with anyone. He remembered when j
'he had played the Toilet Circuit and envied the comics with

I the big limousines and the beautiful women. He had made
E^it, and he was as lonely now as he had been then. Who was
|it who had said, "When you get there, there is no there ..."?
(He was dedicated to becoming Number One and he
|aknew he would make it. His one regret was that his mother
I; would not be there to watch her prediction come true.
The only reminder left of her was his father.

The nursing home in Detroit was an ugly brick building
from another century. Its walls held the sweet stench of old
age and sickness and death.
Toby Temple's father had suffered a stroke and was
almost a vegetable now, a man with listless, apathetic eyes
.and a mind that cared for nothing except Toby's visits. Toby
.stood in the dingy green-carpeted hall of the home that now
held his father. The nurses and inmates crowded adoringly
around him.
"I saw you on the Harold Hobson show last week, Toby.
I thought you were just marvelous. How do you think of all
those clever things to say?"
"My writers think of them," Toby said, and they laughed
at his modesty.
A male nurse was coming down the corridor, wheeling
Toby's father. He was freshly shaved and had his hair slicked
down. He had let them dress him in a suit in honor of his
son's visit.
"Hey, it's Beau Brummel!" Toby called, and everyone
turned to look at Mr. Temple with envy, wishing that they
had a wonderful, famous son like Toby to come and visit
them.
Toby walked over to his father, leaned down and gave
him a hug. "Who you trying to kid?" Toby asked. He pointed
to the male nurse. "You should be wheeling him around,
Pop."
Everyone laughed, filing the quip away in their minds
so that they could tell their friends what they had heard Toby
Temple say. / was with Toby Temple the other day and he
said.. .1 was standing as close as I am to you, and I heard
him...
He stood around entertaining them, insulting them gently,
and they loved it. He kidded them about Aeir sex lives and
their health and their children, and for a little while they were
able to laugh at their own problems. Finally, Toby said ruefully,
"I hate to leave you, you're the best-looking audience
I've had in years" -- they would remember that, too -- "but
I have to spend a little time alone with Pop. He promised to
give me some new jokes."
They smiled and laughed and adored him.

Toby was alone in the small visitors room with his father.
Even this room had the smell of death, and yet, that was
what this place was all about, wasn't it? Toby thought. Death?
It was filled with used-up mothers and faAers who were in

the way. They had been taken out of the small back bedrooms at home, out of the dining rooms and parlors where they were becoming an embarrassment whenever there were guests, and had been sent to this nursing home by their children, nieces and nephews. Believe me, it's for your own good. Father, Mother, Uncle George, Aunt Bess. You'll be with a lot of very nice people your own age. You'll have company all the time. You know what I mean? What they really meant was, I'm sending you there to die with all the other useless old people. I'm sick of your drooling at the table and telling the same stories-over an dover and pestering the children and wetting your bed. The Eskimos were more honest about it.

They sent their old people out onto the ice and abandoned them there.
"I'm sure glad you came today," Toby's father said. His speech was slow. "I wanted to talk to you. I got some good news. Old Art Riley next door died yesterday."
Toby stared at him. "That's good news?"
"It means I can move into his room," his father explained. "It's a single."
And that was what old age was all about: Survival, hanging on to the few creature comforts that still remained. Toby had seen people here who would have been better off dead, but they clung to life, fiercely. Happy birthday, Mr. Dorset. How do you feel about being ninety-five years old today?.. . When I think of the alternative, I feel great.
At last, it was time for Toby to leave.
"I'll be back to see you as soon as I can," Toby promised. He gave his father some cash and handed out lavish tips to all the nurses and attendants. "You take good care of him, huh? I need the old man for my act."
And Toby was gone. The moment he walked out the door, he had forgotten them all. He was thinking about his performance that evening.
For weeks they would talk about nothing but his visit.
17

At seventeen, Josephine Oinski was the most beautiful girl in Odessa, Texas. She had a goiden, tanned complexK'n and her long black hair showed a hint of auburn in the sunlight, and her deep brown eyes held flecks of gold. She had a stunning figure, with a full, rounded bosom, a narrow waist that tapered to gently swelling hips, and long, shapely legs.
Josephine 'lid not socialize with the Oil People anymore. She went out with the Others now. After school she worked as a waitress at the Golden Derrick, a popular drive-in. Mary Lou and Cissy Topping and their friends came there with their dates. Josephine always greeted them politely, but everything had changed.
Josephine was filled with a restlessness, a yearning for

something she had never known. It was nameless, but it was
there. She wanted to leave this ugly town, but she did not
know where she wanted to go or what she wanted to do.
Thinking about it too long made her headaches begin.
She went out with a do7en different boys and men. Her'
mother's favorite was Warren Huffman.
"Warren'd make you a fine husband. He's a regular
church-goer, he earns good money as a plumber ar.u he's half
out of his head about you."
"He's twenty-five years old and he's fat."
Her mother studied Josephine. "Poor Polack girls don't
find no knights in shinin' armor. Not in Texas and not
no-place else. Stop foolin' yourself."
Josephine would permit Warren Hofl'man to take her to

the movies once a week. He would hold her hand in his big,
sweaty, calloused palms and keep squeezing it throughout
the picture. Josephine hardly noticed. She was too engrossed
in what was happening on the screen. What was up there was
an extension of the world of beautiful people and things that
, she had grown up with, only it was even bigger and even
more exciting. In some dim recess of her mind, Josephine felt
' that Hollywood could give her everything she wanted: the
i beauty, the fun, the laughter and happiness. Aside from
; marrying a rich man, she knew there was no other way she
, would ever be able to have ±at kind of life. And the rich
boys were all taken, by the rich girls.
Except for one.
David Kcnyon. Josephine thought of him often. She had
stolen a snapshot of him from Mary Lou's house long ago.
She kept it hidden in her closet and took it out to look at
whenever she was unhappy. It brought back the memory of
; David standing by the side of the pool saying, / apologize for
all of them, and the feeling of hurt had gradually disappeared
and been replaced by his gentle warmth. She had seen David
, only once after that terrible day at his swimming pool when
he had brought her a robe. He had been in a car with his
family, and Josephine later heard that he had been driven to
the train depot. He was on his way to Oxford, England. That
had been four years ago, in 1952. David had returned home
for summer vacations and at Christmas, but their paths had
never crossed. Josephine often heard the other girls discussing
him. In addition to the estate David had inherited from his
father, his grandmother had left him a trust fund of five
' million dollars. He was a real catch. But not for the Polish
daughter of a seamstress.

v
: Josephine did not know that David Kenyon had returned
| from Europe. It was a late Saturday evening in July, and
| Josephine was working at the Golden Derrick. It seemed

I to her that half the population of Odessa had come to the
| drive-in to defeat the hot spell with gallons of lemonade and
I ice cream and sodas. It had been so busy that Josephine had
|. been unable to take a break. A ring of autos constantly circled
the neon-lighted drive-in like metallic animals lined up at
some surrealistic water hole. Josephine delivered a car tray
with what seemed to her to be her millionth order of cheeseburgers
and Cokes, pulled out a menu and walked over to a
white sports car that had just driven up.
"Good evening," Josephine said cheerfully. "Would you
like to look at a menu?"
"Hello, stranger."
At the sound of David Kenyon's voice, Josephine's heart
suddenly began to pound. He looked exactly as she remembered
him, only he seemed even more handsome. There was
a maturity now, a sureness, that being abroad had given him.
Cissy Topping was seated next to him, looking cool and
beautiful ia an expensive silk skirt and blouse.
Cissy said, "Hi, Josie. You shouldn't be working on a
hot night like this, honey."
As though it was something Josephine had chosen to do
instead of going to an air-conditioned theater or riding
around in a sports car with Da-aid Kenyan.
Josephine said evenly, "It keeps me off the streets", and
she saw that David Kenyon was smiling at her. She knew that
he understood.
Long after they had gone, Josephine thought about
David. She went over every word -- Hello, stranger... I'll
have a pig in a blanket and a root beer -- make that coffee.
Cold drinks are bad on a hot night.... How do you like
working here?... I'm ready for the check.... Keep the
change.... It was nice seeing you again, Josephine -- looking
for hidden meanings, nuances that she might have missed. Of
course, he could not have said anything with Cissy seated
beside him, but the truth was that he really had nothing to
say to Josephine. She was surprised that he had even remembered
her name.
She was standing in front of the sink in the little kitchen
of the drive-in, lost in her thoughts, when Paco, the young
Mexican cook, came up behind her and said, "nQue pasa,
Josita? You have that look een your eye."
She liked Paco. He was in his late twenties, a slim, dark128
yed man with a ready grin and a flip joke when pressure
uilt up and everyone was tense.
"Who ees he?"
Josephine smiled. "Nobody, Paco."
; "Bueno. Because there are seex hungry cars going' crazy
at there. Vamos!"

He telephoned the next morning, and Josephine knew
'go it was before she lifted the receiver. She had not been
ble to get him out of her mind all night. It was as though
ys call was the extension of her dream. ^

His first words were, "You're a cliche. While I was away,
ou've grown up and become a beauty," and she could have
ied of happiness.
He took her out to dinner that evening. Josephine had
een prepared for some out-of-the-way little restaurant where
)avid would not be likely to run into any of his friends.
nstead they went to his club, where everyone stopped by their
ible to say hello. David was not only unashamed to be seen
dth Josephine, he seemed proud of her. And she loved him
)t it and for a hundred other reasons. The look of him, his
entleness and understanding, the sheer joy of being with
im. She had never known that anyone as wonderful as David
Lenyon could exist.
Each day, after Josephine finished work, they were
igether. Josephine had had to fight men off from the time
lie was fourteen, for there was a sexuality about her that was
challenge. Men were always pawing and grabbing at her,
yhg to squeeze her breasts or shove their hands up her start,
linking that that was the way to excite her, not knowing how
luch it repelled her.
David Kenyon was different. He would occasionally put
is arm around her or touch her casually, and Josephine's
rhole body would respond. She had never felt this way about
nyone before. On the days when she did not see David, she
ould think of nothing else.
She faced the fact that she was in love with him. As the
reeks went by, and they spent more and more time together,
Josephine realized that the miracle had happened. David was
in love with her.
He discussed his problems with her, and his difficulties
with his family. "Mother wants me to take over the businesses,"
David told her, "but I'm not sure that's how I want
to spend Ae rest of my life."
The Kenyon interests included, besides oil wells and
refineries, one of the largest cattle ranches in Ae Southwest,
a chain of hotels, some banks and a large insurance company.
"Can't you just tell her no, David?"
David sighed. "You don't know my mother."
Josephine had met David's mother. She was a tiny
woman (it seemed impossible that David had come out of
that stick figure) who had borne three children. She had been
very ill during and after each pregnancy and had had a heart
attack following the third delivery. Over the years she repeatedly
described her suffering to her children, who grew
up wi& the belief that their mother had deliberately risked
death in order to give each of them life. It gave her a powerful
hold on her family, which she wielded unsparingly.
"I want to live my own life," David told Josephine, "but
I can't do anything to hurt Mother. The truth is -- Doc
Young doesn't think she's going to be with us much longer."
One evening, Josephine told David about her dreams of
going to Hollywood and becoming a star. He looked at her
and said, quietly, "I won't let you go." She could feel her

heart beating wildly. Each time they were together, Ae feeling
of intimacy between Aem grew stronger. Josephine's
background did not mean a damn to David. He did not have
an ounce of snobbery in him. It made Ae incident at Ae
drive-in one night Aat much more shocking.
It was closing time, and David was parked in his car,
waiting for her. Josephine was in Ae small kitchen wiA Paco,
hurriedly putting away Ae last of Ae trays.
"Heavy date, huh?" Paco said.
Josephine smiled. "How did you know?"
"Because you look like Chreestmas. Your pretty face
ces all lit up. You tell heem for me he's one lucky hombre!"
Josephine smiled and said, "I will." On an impulse, she

I leaned over and gave Paco a kiss on the cheek. An instant
| later, she heard the roar of a car engine and then the scream
I of rubber. She turned in time to see David's white convertible
smash the fender of another car and race away from the
drive-in. She stood there, unbelievingly, watching the tail
lights disappear into the night.
At three o'clock in the morning, as Josephine lay tossing
in bed, she heard a car pull up outside her bedroom. She
hurried to the window and looked out. David was sitting
? behind the wheel. He was very drunk. Quickly, Josephine put
on a robe over her nightgown and went outside.
i "Get in,"' David commanded. Josephine opened die car
' door and slid in beside him. There was a long, heavy silence.
When David finally spoke, his voice was thick, but it was
; more than the whiskey he had drunk. There was a rage in
him, a savage fury that propelled the words out of him like
small explosions. "I don't own you," David said. "You're free
to do exactly as you please. But as long as you go out with
me, I expect you not to kiss any god damned Mexicans.
•Y'understand?"
She looked at him, helplessly, then said, "When I kissed
Paco, it was because — he said something that made me happy.
He's my friend."
"David took a deep breath, trying to control the emotions
i that were churning inside him. "I'm going to tell you something
I've never told to a living soul."
Josephine sat there waiting, wondering what was coming
next.
"I have an older sister," David said. "Beth. I — I adore
her."
Josephine had a vague recollection of Beth, a blonde,
fair-skinned beauty, whom Josephine used to see when she
;went over to play with Mary Lou. Josephine had been eight
t'when Beth passed away. David must have been about fifteen.
.>"! remember when Beth died," Josephine said.
;• David's next words were a shock. "Beth is alive."
| She stared at him. "But, I — everyone thought —"

,;i "She's in an insane asylum." He turned to face her, his 'crice dead. "She was raped by one of our Mexican gardeners, Beth's bedroom was across the hall from mine. I heard her screams and I raced into her room. He had ripped off her nightgown and he was on top of her and --" His voice broke with the memory. "I struggled with him until my mother ran in and called the police. They finally arrived and took the man to jail. He committed suidde in his cell that night. -But Beth had lost her mind. She'll never leave that place. Never. I can't tell you how much I love her, Josie. I miss her so damned much. Every since that night, I -- I -- I can't -- stand --"

She placed a hand over his and said, "I'm sorry, David. I understand, I'm glad you told me."

In some strange way, the incident served to bring them even closer together. They discussed things they had never talked about before. David smiled when Josephine told him about her mother's religious fanaticism. "I had an uncle like that once," he said. "He went off to some monastery in Tibet."

"I'm going to be twenty-four next month," David told Josephine one day. "It's an old family tradition that the Kenyon men marry by the time they're twenty-four," and her heart leaped within her.

The following evening, David had tickets for a play at the Globe Theatre. When he came to pick Josephine up, he said, "Let's forget the play. We're going to talk about our future."

The moment Josephine heard the words, she knew that everything she had prayed for was coming true. She could read it in David's eyes. They were filled wiA love and wanting.

She said, "Let's drive out to Dewey Lake."

She wanted it to be the most romantic proposal ever made, so that one day it would become a tale that she would tell her children, over an dover. She wanted to remember every moment of this night.

Dewey Lake was a small body of water about forty miles outside of Odessa. The night was beautiful and star-spangled, with a soft, waxing gibbous moon. The stars danced on Ac

®ter, and the air was filled with the mysterious sounds of a pcret world, a microcosm of the universe, where millions of (ny unseen creatures made love and pseyed and were preyed toon and died.

; Josephine and David sat in the car, silent, listening to lie sounds of the night. Josephine watched him, sitting ishind the wheel of the car, his handsome face intense and ferious. She had never loved him as much as she loved him t that moment. She wanted to do something wonderful for

Sffl, to give him something to let him know how much she
iared for him. And suddenly she knew what she was going
b do.
"Let's go for a swim, David," she said.
"We didn't bring bathing suits."
'It doesn't matter."
He turned to look at her and started to speak, but
bsephine was out of the car, running down to the shore of
tie lake. As she started to undress she could hear him moving
ehind her. She plunged into the warm water. A moment
rter David was beside her.
"Josie..."
She turned toward him, then into him, her body hurting
nth wanting, hungry for him. They embraced in the water
nd she could feel the male hardness of him pressed against
;er, and he said, "We can't. Josie." His voice was choked with
is desire for her. She reached down for him and said, "Yes.
)h, yes, David."
They were back on the shore and he was on top of her
nd inside her and one with her and they were both a part
f the stars and the earth and the velvet night.
They lay together a long time, holding each other. It
ras not until much later, after David had dropped her off
t home, that Josephine remembered that he had not pro- osed to her. But it no longer mattered. What they had
bared together was more binding than any marriage ceremony.
Ie would propose tomorrow.

Josephine slept until noon the next day. She woke up
rith a smile on her face. The smiie was still there when her

mother came into the bedroom carrying a lovely old wedding
dress. "Go down to Brubaker's and get me twelve yards of
tulle right away. Mrs. Topping just brought me her wedding
dress. I have to make it over for Cissy by Saturday. She and
David Kenyon are getting married."

David Kenyon had gone to see his mother as soon as he
drove Josephine home. She was in bed, a tiny, frail woman
who had once been very beautiful.
His mother opened her eyes when David walked into
her dimly, lit bedroom. She smiled when she saw who it was.
"Hello, son. You're up late."
"I was out with Josephine, Mother."
She said nothing, just watching him with her intelligent
gray eyes.
"I'm going to marry her," David said.
She shook her head slowly. "I can't let you make a
mistake like that, David."
"You don't really know Josephine. She's -- "
"I'm sure she's a lovely girl. But she's not suitable to be

a Kenyon wife. Cissy Topping would make you happy. And
if you married her, it would make me happy."
He took her frail hand in his and said, "I love you very
much, Mother, but I'm capable of making my own decisions."
"Are you really?" she asked softly. "Do you always do the
right thing?"
He stared at her and she said, "Can you always be
trusted to act properly, David? Not to lose your head? Not to
do terrible --"
He snatched his hand away.
"Do you always know what you're doing, son?" Her voice
was even softer now.
"Mother, for God's sake!"
"You've done enough to this family already, David. Don't
burden me any further. I don't think I could bear it."
His face was white. "You know I didn't -- I couldn't
help--"
"You're too old to send away again. You're a man now.
I want you to act like one."

His voice was anguished. "I -- I love her --"
She was seized with a spasm, and David summoned the
ctor. Later, he and the doctor had a talk.
"I'm afraid your mother hasn't much longer, David."
And so the decision was made for him.
He went to see Cissy Topping.
"I'm in love with someone else," David said. "My mother
ways thought that you and I --"
"So did I, darling."
"I know it's a terrible thing to ask, but -- would you be
killing to marry me until -- until my mother dies, and then
live me a divorce?"
fr Cissy looked at him and said softly, "If that's what you
leant, David."
11 He felt as though an unbearable weight had been lifted
Stom his shoulders. "Thank you. Cissy, I can't tell you how
much--"
She smiled and said, "What are old friends for?"

The moment David left. Cissy Topping telephoned
David's mother. All she said was, "It's all arranged."

The one thing David Kenyon had not anticipated was
faat Josephine would hear about the forthcoming marriage
xfore he could explain everything to her. When David arrived
it Josephine's home, he was met at the door by Mrs. Czinsld.
"I'd like to see Josephine," he said.
She glared at him with eyes filled with malicious triumph.
The Lord Jesus shall overcome and smite down His enemies,
and the wicked shall be damned forever."
David said patiently, "I want to talk to Josephine."

"She's gone," Mrs. Czinsld said. "She's gone away!"
The dusty Greyhound Odessa-El Paso-San BemardinoLos
Angeles bus pulled into the Hollywood depot on Vine
Street at seven a.m., and somewhere during the fifteen-hundred-mile,
two-day Journey, Josephine Czinski had become
Jill Castle. Outwardly, she looked like the same person. It
was inside that she had changed. Something ui her was gone.
The laughter had died.
The moment she had heard the news, Josephine knew
that she must escape. She began to mindlessly throw her
clothes into a suitcase. She had no idea where she was going
or what she would do when she got there. She only knew
that she had to get away from this place at once.
It was when she was walking out of her bedroom and
saw the photographs of the movie stars on her wall that she
suddenly knew where she was going. Two hours later, she was
on the bus for Hollywood. Odessa and everyone in it receded
in her mind, fading faster and faster as the bus swept her
toward her new destiny. She tried to make herself forget her
raging headache. Perhaps she should have seen a doctor about
the terrible pains in her head. But now she no longer cared.
That was part of her past, and she was sure they would go
away. From now on life was going to be wonderful. Josephine
Czinski was dead.
Long live Jill Castle.
BOOK TWO
Toby Temple became a superstar because of the unlikely
aposition of a paternity suit, a ruptured appendix and the
ssident of the United States.

The Washington Press Club was giving its annual dinner,
1 the guest of honor was the President. It was a prestigious
ur attended by the Vice-President, senators. Cabinet
mbers. Chief Justices and anyone else who could buy,
tow or steal a ticket. Because the event was always given
smational press coverage, the job of master of ceremonies
1 become a highly prized plum. This year, one of America's
i comedians had been chosen to emcee the show. One week
after he had accepted, he was named defendant in a paternity
ait involving a fifteen-year-old girl. On the advice of his
tomey, the comedian immediately left the country for an
definite vacation. The dinner committee turned to their
nber two choice, a popular motion-picture and television
". He arrived in Washington the night before the dinner.
e following afternoon, on the day of the banquet, his agent
phoned to rnnounce that the actor was in the hospital,
dergoing emergency surgery for a burst appendix.
There were only six hours left before the dinner. The
amittee frantically went through a list of possible replacents.
The important names were busy doing a movie or a
;vision show, or were too far away to get to Washington in
e. One by one, the candidates were eliminated and finally,
ar the bottom of the list, the name of Toby Temple appeared.

A committee member shook his head. "Temple's a nightclub comic. He's too wild. We wouldn't dare turn him loose on the President."
"He'd be all right if we could get him to tone down his material."
The chairman of the committee looked around and said, "I'll tell you what's great about him, fellows. He's in New York City and he can be here in an hour. The god damned dinner is tonight!"
That was how the committee selected Toby Temple.

As Toby looked around the crowded banquet hall, he thought to himself that if a bomb were dropped here tonight, the federal government of the United States would be leaderless.
The President was seated in the center of the speakers' table on the dais. Half a dozen Secret Service men stood behind him. In the last-minute rush of putting everything together, no one had remembered to introduce Toby to the President, but Toby did not mind. The President will remember me, Toby thought. He recalled his meeting with Downey, the chairman of the dinner committee. Downey had said, "We love your humor, Toby. You're very funny when you attack people. However--" He had paused to clear his throat. "This is -- er -- a sensitive group here tonight. Don't get me wrong. It's not that they can't take a little joke on themselves, but everything said in this room tonight is going to be reported by the news media .all over the world. Naturally, none of us wants anything said that would hold the President of the United States or members of Congress up to ridicule. In other words, we want you to be funny, but we don't want you to get anyone mad."
"Trust me." Toby had smiled.
The dinner plates were being cleared and Downey was standing in front of the microphone. "Mr. President, honored guests, it's my pleasure to introduce to you our master of ceremonies, one of our brightest young comedians, Mr. Toby Temple!"
There was polite applause as Toby rose to his feet and

alked over to the microphone. He looked out at the audience, en turned to the President of the United States.
The President was a simple, homespun man. He did not dieve in what he called top-hat diplomacy. "People to sople," he had said in a nationwide speech, "that's what we sed. We've got to quit depending on computers and start listing our instincts again. When I sit down with the heads foreign powers, I like to negotiate by the seat of my pants." had become a popular phrase.
Now Toby looked at the President of the United States id said, his voice choked with pride, "Mr. President, I can- it tell you what

a thrill it is for me to be up here on the
me podium with the man who has the whole world wired to
s ass."
There was a shocked hush for a long moment, then the
resident grinned, guffawed, and the audience suddenly
yloded with laughter and applause. From that moment on,
oby could do no wrong. He attacked the senators in the
from, the Supreme Court, the press. They adored it. They
reamed and howled, because they knew Toby did not really
can a word of what he said. It was excruciatingly funny tow these insults
coming from that boyish, innocent face.
here were foreign ministers there that night. Toby addressed
iem in a double-talk version of their own languages that
mnded so real that they were nodding in agreement. He was
i idiot-savant, reeling off patter that praised them, berated
iem, and the meaning of his wild gibberish was so dear that
'ery person in the room understood what Toby was saying.
He received a standing ovation. The President walked
rer to Toby and said, "That was brilliant, absolutely brilliant.
Vie giving a little supper at the White House Monday
[ght, Toby, and I'd be delighted..."
The following day, all the newspapers wrote about Toby
emple's triumph. His remarks were quoted everywhere. He
as asked to entertain at the White House. There, he was an
'ea bigger sensation. Important offers began pouring in from
1 over the world. Toby played the Palladium in London, he
ive a command performance for the Queen, he was asked to
induct symphony orchestras for charity and to serve on the

National Arts Committee. He played golf with the President
frequently and was invited to dinner at the White House again
and again. Toby met legislators and governors and the heads
of America's largest corporations. He insulted them all, and
the more he attacked them, the more charmed they were. They
adored having Toby around, turning his acerbic wit loose on
their guests. Toby's friendship became a symbol of prestige
among the Brahmins.
The offers that were coming in were phenomenal. Clifton
Lawrence was as excited about them as Toby, and Clifton's
excitement had nothing to do with business or money. Toby
Temple had been the most wonderful thing that had happened
to him in years, for he felt as though Toby were his son. He
had spent more time on Toby's career than on any of his
other clients, but it had been worth it. Toby had worked hard,
had perfected his talent until it shone like a diamond. And
he was appreciative and generous, something that was rare in
this business.
"Every top hotel in Vegas is after you," Clifton Lawrence
told Toby. "Money is no object. They want you, period. I
have scripts on my desk from Fox, LIniversal, Pan-Pacific --
all starring parts. You can do a tour of Europe, any guest shot

you want, or you can have your own television show on any
of the networks. That would still give you time to do Vegas
and a picture a year."
"How much could I make with my own television show,
Cliff?"
"I think I can push them up to ten thousand a week for
ah hour variety show. They'll have to give us a firm two years,
maybe three. If they want you badly enough, they'll go for it."
Toby leaned back on the couch, exulting. Ten thousand
a show, say forty shows a year. In three years, that would
come to over one million dollars for telling the world what
he thought of it! He looked over at Clifton. The little agent
was trying to play it cool, but Toby could see that he was
eager. He wanted Toby to make the television deal. Why not?
Clifton could pick up a hundred-andtwentythousand-dollar
commission for Toby's talent and sweat. Did Clifton really
deserve that kind of money? He had never had to work his ass

in filthy little clubs or have drunken audiences throw
ipty beer bottles at him or go to greedy quacks in nameless
lages to have a clap treated because the only girls available
re the raddled whores around the Toilet Circuit. What did
ifton Lawrence know of the cockroach-ridden rooms and
ie greasy food and the endless procession of all-night bus
ides going from one hell-hole to another? He could never
nderstand. One critic had called Toby an overnight success,
nd Toby had laughed aloud. Now, sitting in Clifton
.^awrence's office, be said, "I want my own television show."
;, Six weeks later, the deal was signed with Consolidated
'Broadcasting.
' "The network wants a studio to do the deficit financing,"
•Clifton Lawrence told Toby. "I like the idea because I can
.parlay it into a picture deal."
, "Which studio?"
> "Pan-Pacific."
j Toby frowned. "Sam Winters?"
"That's right. For my money, he's the best studio head
in the business. Besides, he owns a property I want for you,
:The Kid Goes West."
;,. Toby said, "I was in the army with Winters. Okay. But
i he owes me one. Shaft the bastard!"
Clifton Lawrence and Sam Winters were in the steam
room in the gymnasium at Pan-Pacific Studios, breathing in
the eucalyptus scent of the heated air.
' "This is the life," the little agent sighed. "Who needs
: money?"
I Sam grinned. "Why don't you talk like that when we're
I negotiating. Cliff?"
| "I don't want to spoil you, dear boy."
, "I hear that you made a deal with Toby Temple at
| Consolidated Broadcasting."

| "Yeah. Biggest deal they've ever made."
I "Where are you going to get the deficit financing for the
I show?"
I "Why, Sam?"
"We could be interested. I might even throw in a picture
deal. I just bought a comedy called The Kid Goes West. It
hasn't been announced yet. I think Toby'd be perfect for it."
Clifton Lawrence frowned and said, "Shit! I wish I'd
known about this earlier, Sam. I've made a dear at MGM."
"Have you closed yet?"
"Well, practically. I gave Aem my word..."
Twenty minutes later, Clifton Lawrence had negotiated
a lucrative arrangement for Toby Temple in which PanPadfic
Studios would produce "The Toby Temple Show"
and star him in The Kid Goes West.
The negotiations could have gone on longer, but the
steam room had become unbearably hot.

One of the stipulations in Toby Temple's contract was
that he did not have to come to rehearsals. Toby's stand-in
would work with the guest stars in the sketches and dance
routines, and Toby would appear for the final rehearsal and
taping. In this way, Toby could keep his part fresh and
exciting.
On the afternoon of the show's premiere, in September,
1956, Toby walked into the theater on Vine Street where the
show would be taped and sat watching the run-through. When
it was over, Toby took his stand-in's place. Suddenly the
theater was filled with electricity. The show came to life and
crackled and sparkled. And when it was taped that evening
and went on the air, forty million people watched it. It was
as though television had been made for Toby Temple. In
close up, he was even more adorable, and everyone wanted
him in his living room. The show was an instant success. It
jumped to number one in the Nielsen Ratings, and there it
firmly remained. Toby Temple was no longer a star.
He had become a superstar.

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Hollywood was more exciting than Jill Castle had ever
dreamed. She went on sightseeing tours and saw the outside
, of the stars' homes. And she knew that one day she would
have a beautiful home in Bel-Air or Beverly Hills. Meanwhile,
Jill lived in an old rooming house, an ugly two-story wooden
structure that had been converted into an even uglier twelvebedroom
house with tiny bedrooms. Her room was inexpensive,
-which meant that she could stretch out the two hundred
dollars she had saved up. The house was located on Bronson,
a few minutes from Hollywood and Vine Street, the heart of
Hollywood, and was convenient to the motion-picture studios.
There was another feature about the house that attracted
Jill. There were a dozen roomers, and all of them were either

trying to get into pictures, were working in pictures as extras or bit players or had retired from the Business. The old-timers floated around the house in yellowed robes and curlers, frayed suits and scuffed shoes that would no longer take a shine. The roomers looked used up, rather than old. There was a common living room with battered and sprung furniture where they all gathered in the evening to exchange gossip. Everyone gave Jill advice, most of it contradictory.

"The way to get into pictures, honey, is you find yourself an AD who likes you." This from a sour-faced lady who had recently been fired from a television series.

"What's an AD?" Jill asked.

"An assistant director." In a tone that pitied Jill's ignorance. "He's the one who hires the supes."

Jill was too embarrassed to ask what the "supes" were.

"If you want my advice, you'll find yourself a horny casting director. An AD can only use you on his picture. A casting director can put you into everything." This from a toothless woman who must have been in her eighties.

"Yeah? Most of them are fags." A balding character actor.

"What's the difference? I mean, if it gets one launched?" An intense, bespectacled young man who burned to be a writer.

"What about starting out as an extra?" Jill asked. "Central Casting --"

"Forget it. Central Casting's books are closed. They won't even register you unless you're a specialty."

"I'm -- I'm sorry. What's a specialty?"

"It's like if you're an amputee. That pays thirty-three fifty-eight instead of the regular twenty-one fifty. Or if you own dinner clothes or can ride a horse, you make twenty-eight thirty-three. If you know how to deal cards or handle the stick at a crap table, that's twenty-eight thirty-three. If you can play football or baseball, that pays thirty-three fifty-eight -- same as an amputee. If you ride a camel or an elephant, it's fifty-five ninety-four. Take my advice, forget about being an extra. Go for a bit part."

"I'm not sure what the difference is," Jill confessed.

"A bit player's got at least one line to say. Extras ain't allowed to talk, except the omnies."

"The what?"

'The omnies -- the ones who make background noises."

"First thing you gotta do is get yourself an agent."

"How do I find one?"

"They're listed in the Screen Actor. That's the magazine the Screen Actors Guild puts out. I got a copy in my room. I'll get it."

They all looked through the list of agents with Jill, and finally narrowed it down to a dozen of the smaller ones. The consensus of opinion was that Jill would not have a chance at a large agency.

Armed with the list, Jill began to make the rounds. The

first six agents would not even talk to her. She ran into the
; seventh as he was leaving his office.
S "Excuse me," Jill said. "I'm looking for an agent."
He eyed her a moment and said, "Let's see your portfolio."
I
She stared at him blankly. "My what?"
I "You must have just gotten off the bus. You can't operate
t in this town without a book. Get some pictures `;/91' taken. Different
', poses. Glamour stuff. Tits and ass."
Jill found a photographer in Culver City near the David
Seiznick Studios, who did her portfolio for thirty-five dollars.
She picked up the pictures a week later and was very pleased
with them. She looked beautiful. All of her moods had been
captured by the camera. She was pensive ... angry ... loving
... sexy. The photographer had bound the pictures together
in a book with looseleaf cellophane pages.
"At the front here," he explained, "you put your acting
credits."
Credits. That was the next step.
By the end of the next two weeks, Jill had seen, or tried
to see, every agent on her list. None of them was remotely
interested. One of them told her, "You were in here yesterday,
honey."
She shook her head. "No, I wasn't."
"Well, she looked exactly like you. That's the problem.
You all look like Elizabeth Taylor or Lana Turner or Ava
Gardner. If you were in any other town trying to get a job in
any other business, everybody would grab you. You're beautiful,
you're sexy-looking, and you've got a great figure. But in
Hollywood, looks are a drug on the market. Beautiful girls
come here from all over the world. They starred in their high
school play or they won a beauty contest or their boyfriend
told them they ought to be in pictures — and whammo! They
flock here by the thousands, and they're all the same girl.
Believe me, honey, you were in here yesterday."
The boarders helped Jill make a new list of agents. Their
offices were smaller and the locations were in the cheap-rent
district, but the results were the same.
"Come back when you've got some acting experience,
kid. You're a looker, and for all I know you could be the
greatest thing since Garbo, but I can't waste my time finding
out. You go get yourself a screen credit and I'll be your agent."
"How can I get a screen credit if no one will give me
a job?"
He nodded. "Yeah. That's the problem. Lots of luck."

There was only one agency left on Jill's list, recommended
by a girl she had sat next to at the Mayflower Coffee Shop
on Hollywood Boulevard. The Dunning Agency was located
in a small bungalow off La Cienega in a residential area. Jill

had telephoned for an appointment, and a woman had told
her to come in at six o'clock.
Jill found herself in a small office that had once been
someone's living room. There was an old scarred desk littered
with papers, a fake-leather couch mended with white surgical
tape and three rattan chairs scattered around the room. A
tall, heavyset woman with a pockmarked face came out of
another room and said, "Hello. Can I help you?"
"I'm Jill Castle. I have an appointment to see Mr.
Dunning."
"Miss Dunning," the woman said. "That's me."
"Oh," said Jill, in surprise. "I'm sorry, I thought --"
The woman's laugh was warm and friendly. "It doesn't
matter."
But it does matter, Jill thought, filled with a sudden
excitement. Why hadn't it occurred to her before? A woman
agent! Someone who had gone through all the traumas, someone
who would understand what it was like for a young girl
just starting out. She would be more sympathetic than any
man could ever be.
"I see you brought your portfolio," Miss Dunning was
saying. "May I look at it?"
"Certainly," Jill said. She handed it over.
The woman sat down, opened the portfolio and began to
mm the pages, nodding approval. "The camera likes you."

Jill did not know what to say. "Thank you."
The agent studied the pictures of Jill in a bathing suit.
"You've got a good figure. That's important. Where you
from?"
"Texas," .Till said. "Odessa."
"How long have you been in Hollywood, Jill?"
"About two months."
"How many agents have you been to?"
For an instant, Jill was tempted to lie, but there was
nothing but compassion and understanding in the woman's
eyes. "About thirty, I guess."
The agent laughed. "So you finally got down to Rose
Dunnins:. Well, you could have done worse. I'm not MCA
or William Morris, but I keep my people working."
"I haven't had any acting experience."
The woman nodded, unsurprised. "If you had, you'd be
at MCA or William Morris. I'm a kind of breaking-in station.
I get the kids with talent started, and then the big agencies
snatch them away from me."
For the first time in weeks, Jill began to feel a sense of
hope. "Do -- do you think you'd be interested in handling
me?" she asked.
The woman smiled. "I have clients working who aren't
half as pretty as you. I think I can put you to work. That's the
only way you'll ever get experience, right?"
Jill felt a glow of gratitude.
"The trouble with this damned town is that they won't

give kids like you a chance. All the studios scream that they're desperate for new talent, and then they put up a big wall and won't let anybody in. Well, we'll fool 'em. I know of three things you might be right for. A daytime soap, a bit in the Toby Temple picture and a part in the new Tessie Brand movie."
Jill's head was spinning. "But would they --?"
"If I recommend you, they'll take you. I don't send clients who aren't good. They're just bit parts, you understand, but it will be a start."
"I can't tell you how grateful I'd be," Jill said.

"I think I've got the soap-opera script here." Rose Dunning lumbered to her feet, pushing herself out of her chair, and walked into the next room, beckoning Jill to follow her.
The room was a bedroom with a double bed in a corner under a window and a metal filing cabinet in the opposite corner. Rose Dunning waddled over to the filing cabinet, opened a drawer, took out a script and brought it over to Jill.
"Here we are. The casting director is a good friend of mine, and if you come through on this, he'll keep you busy."
"I'll come through," Jill promised fervently.
The agent smiled and said, "Course, I can't send over a pig in a poke. Would you mind reading for me?"
"No. Certainly not."
The agent opened the script and sat down on the bed.
"Let's-read this scene."
Jill sat on the bed next to her and looked at the script.
"Your character is Natalie. She's a rich girl who's married to a weakling. She derides to divorce him, andJie won't let her. You make your entrance here."
Jill quickly scanned the scene. She wished she had had a chance to study the script overnight or even for an hour. She was desperately anxious to make a good impression.
"Ready?"
"I -- I think so," Jill said. She closed her eyes and tried to think like the character. A rich woman. Like the mothers of the friends that she had grown up with, people who took it for granted that they could have anything they wanted in life, believing that other people were there for their convenience. The Cissy Toppings of the world. She opened her eyes, looked down at the script and began to read. "I want to talk to you, Peter."
"Can't it wait?" That was Rose Dunning, cueing her.
"I'm afraid it's waited too long already. I'm catching a plane for Reno this afternoon."
"Just like that?"
"No. I've been trying to catch that plane for five years, Peter. This time I'm going to make it."
Jill felt Rose Duaaing's hand patting her thigh. "That's

very good," the agent said, approvingly. "Keep reading." She
let her hand rest on Jill's leg.
"Your problem is that you haven't grown up yet. You're
still playing games. Well, from now on, you're going to have
to play by yourself."
Rose Dunning's hand was stroking her thigh. It was disconcerting.
"Fine. Go on," she said.
"I -- I don't want you to try to get in touch with me ever
again. Is that quite clear?"
The hand was stroking Jill faster, moving toward her
groin. Jill lowered the script and looked at Rose Dunning.
The woman's face was flushed and her eyes had a glazed look
in them.
"Keep reading," she said huskily.
"I -- I can't," Jill said. "If you --"
The woman's hand began to move faster. "This is to
get you in the mood, darling. It's a sexual fight, you see. I
want to feel the sex in you." Her hand was pressing harder
now, moving between Jill's legs.
"No! " Jill got to her feet, trembling.
Saliva was dribbling out of the corner of the woman's
mouth. "Be good to me and I'll be good to you." Her voice
was pleading. "Come here, baby." She held out her arms and
made a ^rab for her, and Jill ran out of the office.
In the street outside, she vomited. Even when the racking
spasms were over and her stomach had quieted down, she
felt no better. Her headache had started again.
It was not fair. The headaches didn't belong to her. They
belonged to Josephine Czinski.

During the next fifteen months, Jill Castle became a fullfledged
member of the Survivors, the tribe of people on the
fringes of show business who spent years and sometimes a
whole lifetime trying to break into the Business, working at
other jobs temporarily. The fact that the temporary jobs sometimes
lasted ten or fifteen years did not discourage them.
As ancient tribes once sat around long-ago campfires and
recounted sagas of brave deeds, so the Survivors sat around
Schwab's Drugstore, telling and retelling heroic tales of show
business, nursing cups of cold coffee while they exchanged
the latest bits of inside gossip. They were outside the Business,
and yet, in some mysterious fashion, they were at the very
pulse and heartbeat of it. They could tell you what star was
going to be replaced, what producer had been caught sleeping
with his director, what network head was about to be kicked
upstairs. They knew these things before anyone else did,
through their own special kind of jungle drums. For the
Business was a jungle. They had no illusions about that. Their
illusions lay in another direction. They thought they could
find a way to get through the studio gates, scale the studio

walls. They were artists, they were the Chosen. Hollywood
was their Jericho and Joshua would blow his golden trumpet
and the mighty gates would fall before them and their enemies
would be smitten, and lo, Sam Winters's magic wand would
be waved and they would be wearing silken robes and be Movie
Stars and adored ever after by their grateful public. Amen.
The coffee at Schwab's was heady sacramental wine, and they
were the Disciples of the future, huddling together for comfort,
warming one another with their dreams, on the very
brink of making it. They had met an assistant director who
told them a producer who said a casting director who
promised and any second now, and the reality would be in
their grasp.
In the meantime, they worked in supermarkets and garages
and beauty parlors and car washes. They lived with each other
and married each other and divorced each other, and they
never noticed how time was betraying them. They were unaware
of the new lines and the graying temples, and the fact
that it took half an hour longer in the morning to put on
makeup. They had become shopworn without having been
used, aged without mellowing, too old for a career with a
plastics company, too old to have babies, too old for those
younger parts once so coveted.
They were now character actors. But they still dreamed.
The younger and prettier girls were picking up what they
called mattress money.
"Why break your ass over some nine-to-five job when all

you have to do is lay on your back a few minutes and pick
up an easy twenty bucks? Just till your agent calls."
Jill was not interested. Her only interest in life was her
career. A poor Polish girl could never marry a David Kenyon.
She knew that now. But Jill Castle, the movie star, could
have anybody, and anything she wanted. Unless she could
achieve that, she would change back into Josephine Czinski
again.
She would never let that happen.

Jill's first acting job came through Harriet Marcus, one
of the Survivors who had a third cousin whose ex-brother-inlaw
was a second assistant director on a television medical
series shooting at Universal Studios. He agreed to give Jill
a chance. The part consisted of one line, for which Jill was
to receive fifty-seven dollars, minus deductions for Sodal
Security, withholding taxes and the Motion Picture Relief
Home. Jill was to play the part of a nurse. The script called
for her to be in a hospital room at a patient's bedside, taking
his pulse when the doctor entered.
doctor : "How is he, Nurse?"
nurse: "Not very good, I'm afraid. Doctor."
That was it.

Jill was given a single, mimeographed page from the
script on a Monday afternoon and told to report for makeup
at six a.m. the following morning. She went over the scene
a hundred times. She wished the studio had given her the
entire script. How did they expect her to figure out what the
character was like from one pagef Jill tried to analyze what
kind of a woman the nurse might be. Was she married?
Single? She could be secretly in love with the doctor. Or
maybe they had had an affair and it was over. How did she
feel about the patient? Did she hate the thought of his death?
Or would it be a blessing?
"Not very good, I'm afraid. Doctor." She tried to put
concern in her voice.
She tried again. "Not very good. I'm afraid. Doctor."
Alarmed. He was going to die.

"Not very good, I'm afraid. Doctor." Accusing. It was the
doctor's fault. If he had not been away with his mistress ...
Jill stayed up the entire night working on the part, too
keyed-up to sleep, but in the morning, when she reported to
the studio, she felt exhilarated and alive. It was still dark
when she arrived at the guard's gate off Lankershim Boulevard,
in a car borrowed from her friend Harriet. Jill gave
the guard her name, and he checked it against a roster and
waved her on.
"Stage Seven," he said. "Two blocks down, turn right."
Her name was on the roster. Universal Studios was expecting her. It was like
a wonderful dream. As Jill drove
toward the sound stage, she decided she would discuss the
part with the director, let him know that she was capable of
giving 'him any interpretation he wanted. Jill pulled into the
large parking lot and went onto Stage Seven.
The sound stage was crowded with people busily moving
lights, carrying electrical equipment, setting up the camera,
giving orders in a foreign language she did not understand.
"Hit the inky clink and give me a brute.... I need a scrim
here.... Kill the baby...."
Jill stood there watching, savoring the sights and smells
and sounds of show business. This was her world, her future.
She would find a way to impress the director, show him that
she was someone special. He would get to know her as a
person, not as just another actress.
The second assistant director herded Jill and a dozen
other actors over to Wardrobe, where Jill was handed a nurse's
uniform and sent back to the sound stage, where she was made
up with all the other bit players in a corner of the sound stage.
Just as they were finished with her, the assistant director called
her name. Jill hurried on to the hospital-room set where the
director stood near the camera, talking to the star of the series.
The star's name was Rod Hanson, and he played a surgeon full
of compassion and wisdom. As Jill approached them. Rod

Hanson was saying, "I have a German shepherd that can fart better dialogue than this shit. Why can't the writers ever give me some character, for Christ's sake?"

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"Rod, we've been on the air five years. Don't improve i hit. The public loves you the way you are."
The cameraman walked up to the director. "All lit, chief."
"Thanks, Hal," the director said. He turned to Rod Hanson. "Can we make this, baby? We'll finish the discussion later."
"One of these days, I'm going to wipe my ass with this studio," Hanson snapped. He strode away.
Jill turned to the director, who was now alone. This was her opportunity to discuss the interpretation of the character, to show him that she understood his problems and was there to help make the scene great. She gave him a warm, friendly smile. "I'm Jill Castle," she said. "I'm playing the nurse. I think she can really be very interesting and I have some ideas about —"
He nodded absently and said, "Over by the bed," and walked away to speak to the cameraman.
Jill stood looking after him, stunned. The second assistant director, Harriet's third cousin's ex-brother-in-law, hurried up to Jill and said in a low voice, "For Chrissakes, didn't you hear him? Over by the bed!"
"I wanted to ask him —"
"Don't blow it!" he whispered fiercely. "Get out there!"
Jill walked over to the patient's bed.
"All right. Let's have it quiet, everybody." The assistant director looked at the director. "Do you want a rehearsal, chief?"
"For this? Let's go for a take."
"Give us a bell. Settle down, everybody. Nice and quiet. We're rolling. Speed."
Unbelievingly, Jill listened to the sound of the bell. She looked frantically toward the director, wanting to ask him how he would like her to interpret the scene, what her relationship was to the dying man, what she was —
A voice called, "Action!"
They were all looking at Jill expectantly. She wondered whether she dare ask them to stop the cameras for just a second, so she could discuss the scene and —
The director yelled, "Jesus Christ! Nurse! This isn't a morgue -- it's a hospital. Feel his god damned pulse before he dies of old age!"
Jill looked anxiously into the circle of bright lights around her. She took a deep breath, lifted the patient's hand and took his pulse. If they would not help her, she would have to interpret the scene in her own way. The patient was the father of the doctor. The two of them had quarreled. The father had been in an accident and the doctor had just been

notified. Jill looked up and saw Rod Hanson approaching. He walked up to her and said, "How is he. Nurse?"
Jill looked into the doctor's eyes and read the concern there. She wanted to tell him the truth, that his father was dying, that it was too late for them to make up their quarrel. Yet she had to break it to him in such a way that it would not destroy him and --
The director was yelling, "Cut! Cut! Cut! Goddamn it, the idiot's got one line, and she can't even remember it. Where did you find her -- in the Yellow Pages?"
Jill turned toward the voice shouting from Ae darkness, aflame with embarrassment. "I -- I know my line," she said shaldly. "I was just trying to --"
"Well, if you know it, for Chrissakes, would you mind saying it7 You could drive a train through that pause. When he asks you the rucking question, answer it. Okay?"
"I was just wondering if I should --"
"Let's go again, right away. Give us a bell."
"We're on a bell. Hold it down. We're rolling."
"Speed."
"Action."
Jill's legs were trembling. It was as though she was the only one here who cared about the scene. All she had wanted to do was create something beautiful. The hot lights were making her dizzy, and she could feel the perspiration running down her arms, ruining the crisp, starched uniform.
"Action! Nurse!"
Jill stood over the patient and put her hand on his pulse. If she did the scene wrong again, they would never give her another chance. She thought of Harriet and of her friends at the roominghousc and of what they would say.

The doctor entered and walked up to her. "How is he, Nurse?"
She would no longer be one of them. She would be a laughingstock. Hollywood was a small town. Word got around fast.
"Not very good, I'm afraid. Doctor."
No other studio would touch her. It would be her last job. It would be the end of everything, her whole world.
The doctor said, "I want this man put in intensive care immediately."
"Good!" the director called. "Cut and print."
Jill was hardly aware of the people rushing past her, starting to dismantle the set to make room for the next one. She had done her first scene--and she had been thinking about something else. She could not believe it was over. She wondered whether she should find the director and thank him for the opportunity, but he was at the other end of the stage talking to a group of people. The second assistant director came up to her and squeezed' her arm and said, "You did

okay, kid. Only next time, learn your lines."

There was film on her; she had her first credit.
From now on, Jill thought, I'll be working all the time.

JiU's next acting job was thirteen months later, when she did a bit part at MGM. In the meantime, she held a series of civilian jobs. She became the local Avon lady, she worked behind a soda fountain and -- briefly -- she drove a taxi.
With her money running low, Jill decided to share an apartment with Harriet Marcus. It was a two-bedroom apartment and Harriet kept her bedroom working overtime. Harriet worked at a downtown department store as a model. She was an attractive girl with short dark hair, black eyes, a model's boyish figure and a sense of humor.
"When you come from Hoboken," she told Jill, "you'd better have a sense of humor."
In the beginning, Jill had been a bit daunted by Harriet's cool self-sufficiency, but she soon learned that underneath that sophisticated facade, Harriet was a warm, frightened child.
She was in love constantly. The first time Jill.met her, Harriet said, "I want you to meet Ralph. We're getting married next month."
A week later, Ralph had left for parts unknown, taking with him Harriet's car.
A few days after Ralph had departed, Harriet met Tony.
He was in import-export and Harriet was head-over-heels in love with him.
"He's very important," Harriet confided to Jill. But someone obviously did not think so, because a month later, Tony was found floating in the Los Angeles River with an apple stuffed in his mouth.
Alex was Harriet's next love.
"He's the best-looking thine- you've ever seen," Harriet confided to Jill.
Alex was handsome. He dressed in expensive clothes, drove a flashy convertible and spent a lot of time at the racetracks.
The romance lasted until Harriet started running out of money. It angered Jill that Harriet had so little sense about men.
"I can't help it," Harriet confessed. "I'm attracted to guys who are in trouble. I think it's my mother instinct." She grinned and added, "My mother was an idiot."
Jill watched a procession of Harriet's frances come and go.
There was Nick and Bobby add John and Raymond, until finally Jill could no longer keep track of them.
A few months after they had moved in together, Harriet announced that she was pregnant.
"I think it's Leonard," she quipped, "but you know-- they all look alike in the dark."
"Where is Leonard?"
"He's either in Omaha or Okinawa. I always was lousy at geography."

"What are you going to do?"
"I'm going to have my baby."
Because of her slight figure, Harriet's pregnancy became obvious in a matter of weeks and she had to give up her modeling job. Jill found a job in a supermarket so that she could support the two of them.

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One afternoon when Jill returned home from work, she ound a note from Harriet. It read; "I've always wanted my 'aby to be born in Hoboken. Have gone back home to my oiks. I'll bet there's a wonderful guy there, waiting for me. Thanks for everything." It was signed: "Harriet, The Nun." j
The apartment had suddenly become a lonely place, j

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It was a heady time for Toby Temple. He was forty-two years old and owned the world. He joked with kings and golfed with Presidents, but his millions of beer-drinking fans did not mind because they knew Toby was one of them, their champion who milked all the sacred cows, ridiculed the high and mighty, shattered the shibboleths of the Establishment. They loved Toby, just as they knew that Toby loved them.
He spoke about his mother in all his interviews, and each time she became more saintlike. It was the only way Toby could share his success with her.

Toby acquired a beautiful estate in Bel-Air. The house was Tudor, with eight bedrooms and an enormous stab-case and hand-carved paneling from England. It had a movie theater, a game room, a wine cellar, and on the grounds were a large swimming pool, a housekeeper's cottage and two guest cottages. He bought a lavish home in Palm Springs, a string of racehorses and a trio of stooges. Toby called them all "Mac" and they adored him. They ran errands, chauffeured him, got him girls at any hour of the day or night, took trips with him, gave him massages. Whatever the master desired, the three Macs were always there to give him. They were the jesters to the Nation's Jester. Toby had four secretaries, two just to handle the enormous flow of fan mail. His private secretary was a pretty twenty-one-year-old honey-blonde named Sherry. Her body had been designed by a sex maniac, and Toby insisted

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that she wear short skirts with nothing under them. It saved [them both a lot of time.

| The premiere of Toby Temple's first movie had gone

I remarkably well.' Sam Winters and Clifton Lawrence were
iso. the theater. Afterward they all went to Chasen's to discuss
| the picture.
s Toby had enjoyed his first meeting with Sam after the
' deal had been made. "It would have been cheaper if you had
returned my phone calls," Toby said, and he told Sam of
i how he had tried to reach him.
; "My tough luck," Sam said, ruefully.
Now, as they sat in Chasen's, Sam turned to Clifton
Lawrence. "If you don't take an arm and a leg, I'd like to
make a new three-picture deal for Toby."
^ "Just an arm. I'll give you a call in the morning," the
agent said to Sam. He looked at his watch. "I have to run
along."
"Where you going?" Toby asked.
"I'm meeting another client. I do have other clients, dear
boy."
Toby looked at him oddly, then said, "Sure."

The reviews the next morning were raves. Every critic
predicted that Toby Temple was going to be as big a star in
movies as he was in television.
Toby read all the reviews, then got Clifton Lawrence on
the phone.
"Congratulations, dear boy," the agent said. "Did you
see the Reporter and Variety) Those reviews were love
letters."
"Yeah. It's a green-cheese world, and I'm a big fat rat.
Can I have any more fun than that?"
"I told you you'd own the world one day, Toby, and
now you do. It's all yours." There was a deep satisfaction in
the agent's voice.
' "Cliff, I'd like to talk to you. Can you come over?"
"Certainly. I'll be free at five o'clock and --"
i "I meant now."
There was a brief hesitation, then Clifton said, "I have
appointments until --"
"Oh, if you're too busy, forget it." And Toby hung up.
One minute later, Clifton Lawrence's secretary called and
said, "Mr. Lawrence is on his way to see you, Mr. Temple."

Clifton Lawrence was seated on Toby's couch. "For
God's sake, Toby, you know I'm never too busy for you. I
had no idea you would want to see me today, or I wouldn't
have made other appointments."
Toby sat there staring at him, letting him sweat it out.
Clifton cleared his throat and said, "Come on! You're my
favorite client. Didn't you know that?"
And it was true, Clifton thought. / made him. He's my
creation. I'm enjoying his success as much as he is.
Toby smiled. "Am I really. Cliff?" He could see the tension
easing out of the dapper little agent's body. "I was beginning to wonder."
"What do you mean?"

"You've got so many clients that sometimes I think you
don't pay enough attention to me."
"That's not true. I spend more time --"
"I'd like you to handle just me, Cliff."
Clifton smiled. "You're joking."
"No. I'm serious." He watched the smile leave Clifton's
face. "I think I'm important enough to have my own agent
-- and when I say my own agent, I don't mean someone who's
too busy for me because he has a dozen other people to take
care of. It's like a group fuck. Cliff. Somebody always gets left
with a hard-on."
Clifton studied him a moment, then said, "Fix us a drink."
While Toby went over to the bar, Clifton sat there, thinking.
He knew what the real problem was, and it was not Toby's
ego, or his sense of importance.
It had to do with Toby's loneliness. Toby was the loneliest
man Clifton had ever known. Clifton had watched Toby
buy women by the dozens and try to buy friends with lavish
gifts. No one could ever pick up a check when Toby was
around. Clifton once heard a musician say to Toby,. "You

don't have to buy love, Toby. Everybody loves you, anyway."
Toby winked and said, "Why take a chance?"
The musician never worked on Toby's show again.
Toby wanted all of everybody. He had a need, and the
more he acquired the bigger his fleed grew.
Clifton had heard that Toby went to bed with as many as
half a dozen girls at a time, trying to appease the hunger in
him. But of course, it did not work. What Toby needed was
one girl, and he had not found her. So he went on playing
the numbers game.
He had a desperate need to have people around him all the
time.
Loneliness. The only time it was not there was when
Toby was in front of an audience, when he could hear the
applause and feel the love. It was all really very simple, Clifton
thought. When Toby was not on stage, he carried his
audience with him. He was always surrounded by musicians
and stooges and writers and showgirls and down-and-out
comics, and everyone else he could gather into his orbit.
And now he wanted Clifton Lawrence. All of him.
Clifton handled a dozen clients, but their total income
was not a great deal more than Toby's income from nightclubs,
television and motion pictures, for the deals Clifton had been
able to make for Toby were phenomenal. Nevertheless, Clifton
did not make his decision on the basis of money. He made it
because he loved Toby Temple, and Toby needed him. Just as
he needed Toby. Clifton remembered how flat his life had been
before Toby came into it. There had been no new challenges
for years. He had been coasting on old successes. And he
thought now of the electric excitement around Toby, the fun

. and laughter and the deep camaraderie the two of them shared.
When Toby came back to Clifton and handed him his
| drink, Clifton raised his glass in a toast and said, "To the two
|<rf us, dear boy."

I; It was the season of successes and fun and parties, and
ffoby was always "on". People expected him to be funny.
;An actor could hide behind the words of Shakespeare or Shaw
IT Moliere, and a singer could count on the help of Gershwin

or Rodgers and Hart or Cole Porter. But a comedian was naked.
His only weapon was his wit.
Toby Temple's ad libs quickly became famous around
Hollywood. At a party for the elderly founder of a studio,
someone asked Toby, "Is he really ninety-one years old?"
Toby replied, "Yep. When he reaches one hundred,
they're going to split him two-for-one."
At dinner one evening, a famous physician who took care
of many of the stars told a long and labored joke to a group
of comedians.
"Doc," Toby pleaded, "don't amuse us -- save us!"
One day the studio was using lions in a movie, and as
Toby saw them being trucked by, he yelled, "Christians--
ten minutes!"

Toby's practical jokes became legend. A Catholic friend
of his went to the hospital for a minor operation. While he
was recuperating, a beautiful young nun stopped by his bed.
She stroked his forehead. "You feel nice and cool. Such soft
skin."
"Thank you, Sister."
She leaned over him and began straightening his pillows,
her breasts brushing against his face. In spite of himself, the
poor man began to get an erection. As the Sister started to
straighten the blankets, her hand brushed against him. He was
in an agony of mortification.
"Good Lord," the nun said. "What have we here?" And
she pulled the covers back, revealing his rock-hard penis.
"I--I'm terribly sorry. Sister," he stammered. "I--"
"Don't be sorry. It's a great cock," the nun said, and
began to go down on him.
It was six months before he learned that it was Toby who
had sent the hooker in to him.
As Toby was stepping out of an elevator one day, he
turned to a pompous network executive and said, "By the way,
Will, how did you ever come out on that morals charge?" The
elevator door closed and the executive was left with half a
dozen people eyeing him warily.
When it came time to negotiate a new contract, Toby

arranged for a trained panther to be delivered to him at the

studio. Toby opened Sam Winters's office door while Sam
was in the middle of a meeting.
"My agent wants to talk to you," Toby said. He shoved
the panther inside the office and closed the door.
When Toby told the story later, he said, "Three of the
guys in that office almost had heart attacks. It took them a
month to get the smell of panther piss out of that room."
Toby had a staff of ten writers working for him, headed
by O'Hanlon and Rainger. Toby complained constantly about
the material his writers gave him. Once Toby made a whore a
member of the writing team. When Toby learned that his
writers were spending most of their time in the bedroom, he
had to fire her. Another time, Toby brought an organ grinder
and his monkey to a story conference. It was humiliating and
demeaning, but O'Hanlon and Rainger and the other writers
took it because Toby turned their material into pure gold. He
was the best in the business.
Toby's generosity was profligate. He gave his employees
and his friends gold watches and cigarette lighters and complete
wardrobes and trips to Europe. He carried an enormous
amount of money with him and paid for everything in cash,
including two Rolls-Royces. He was a soft touch. Every Friday
a dozen hangers-on in the Business would line up for a handout.
Once Toby said to one of the regulars, "Hey, what are you
doing here today? I read in Variety that you got a job in a
picture." The man looked at Toby and said, "Hell, don't I get
two weeks' notice?"

There were myriad stories about Toby, and nearly all of
them were true. One day, during a story conference a writer
|walked in late, an unforgivable sin. "I'm sorry I'm late," he
' apologized. "My kid was run over by a car this morning."
I Toby looked at him and said, "Did you bring the
| jokes?"
1; Everyone in the room was shocked. After the meeting,
Eof the writers said to O'Hanlon, "That's the coldest son
i bitch in the world. If you were on fire, he'd sell you
er."

Toby flew in a top brain surgeon to operate on the injured
boy and paid all the hospital bills. He said to the father, "If
you ever mention this to anyone, you're out on your ass."

Work was the only thing that made Toby forget his
loneliness, the only thing that brought him real joy. If a show
went well, Toby was the most amusing companion in the
world, but if the show went badly, he was a demon, attacking
every target within reach of his savage wit.
He was possessive. Once, during a story conference, he
took Rainger's head between his two hands and announced
to the room, "This is mine. It belongs to me."

At the same time he grew to hate writers, because he
needed them and he did not want to need anyone. So he treated
them with contempt. On pay day, Toby made airplanes of the
writer's paychecks and sailed them through the air. Writers
would be fired for the smallest infraction. One day a writer
walked in with a tan and Toby immediately had him discharged.
"Why did you do that?" O'Hanlon asked. "He's one
of our best writers."
"If he was working," Toby said, "he wouldn't have had
rime for a tan."
A new writer brought in a joke about mothers and was
let go.
If a guest on his show got big laughs, Toby would exclaim,
"You're great! I want you on this show every week."
He would look over at the producer and say, "You hear me?"
and the producer would know that the actor was never to
appear on the show again.
Toby was a mass of contradictions. He was jealous of
the success of other comics, yet the following happened. One
day as Toby was leaving his rehearsal stage, he passed the
dressing room of an old-time comedy star, Vinnie Turkel,
whose career had long since gone downhill. Vinnie had been
hired to do his first dramatic part, in a live television play.
He, hoped that it would mean a comeback for him. Now, as
Toby looked into the dressing room, he saw Vinnie on the
couch, drunk. The director of the show came by and said to
Toby, "Let him be, Toby. He's finished."

"What happened?"
"Well, you know Vinnie's trademark has always been
his high, quavery voice. We started rehearsing and every time
Vinnie opened his mouth and tried to be serious, everyone
began to laugh. It destroyed the old guy."
"He was counting on this part, wasn't he?" Toby asked.
The director shrugged. "Every actor counts on every
part."
Toby took Vinnie Turkel home with him and stayed with
the old comedy star, sobering him up. "This is the best role
you've ever had in your life. Are you gonna blow it?"
Vinnie shook his head, miserable. "I've already blown it,
Toby. I can't cut it."
"Who says you can't?" Toby demanded. "You can play
that part better than anyone in the world."
The old man shook his head. "They laughed at me."
"Sure they did. And do you know why? Because you've
made them laugh all your life. They expected you to be funny.
But if you keep going, you'll win them over. You'll kill them."
He spent the rest of the afternoon restoring Vinnie
Turkel's confidence. That evening, Toby telephoned the
director at home. "Turkel's all right now," Toby said. "You
have nothing to worry about."

"I know I haven't," the director retorted. "I've replaced
him."
"(7«-replace him," Toby said. "You've got to give him a
shot."
"I can't take the chance, Toby. He'll get drunk again
and—"
"Tell you what I'll do," Toby offered. "Keep him in.
If you still don't want him after dress rehearsal, I'll take over
his part and do it for nothing."
There was a pause, and the director said, "Hey! Are
you serious?"
"You bet your ass."
"It's a deal," the director said quickly. "Tell Vinnie to
: be at rehearsal at nine o'clock tomorrow morning."
When the show went on the air, it was the hit ,of the
season. And it was Vinnie Turkel whose performance the
critics singled out. He won every prize that television had to
offer and a new career opened up for him as a dramatic actor.
When he sent Toby an expensive gift to show his appreciation,
Toby returned it with a note. "I didn't do it, you did." That
was Toby Temple.
A few months later, Toby signed Vinnie Turkel to do
a sketch in his show. Vinnie stepped on one of Toby's laugh
lines and from that moment on, Toby gave him wrong cues,
tolled his jokes and humiliated him in front of forty million
people.
That was Toby Temple, too.
Someone asked O'Hanlon what Toby Temple was really
like, and O'Hanlon replied, "Do you remember the picture
where Charlie Chaplin meets the millionaire? When the
millionaire is drunk, he's Chaplin's buddy. When he's sober,
he throws him out on his ass. That's Toby Temple, only
without the liquor."
Once during a meeting with the heads of a network, one
of the junior executives hardly said a word. Later, Toby said
to Clifton Lawrence, "I don't think he liked me."
"Who?"
"The kid at the meeting."
"What do you care? He's a thirty-second Assistant
Nobody."
"He didn't say a word to me," Toby brooded. "He
really doesn't like me."
Toby was so upset that Clifton Lawrence had to track
down the young executive. He called the bewildered man in
the middle of the night and said, "Do you have anything
against Toby Temple?"
"Me? I think he's the funniest man in the whole world!"
"Then would you do me a favor, dear boy? Call him and
tell him so."
"What?"
"Call Toby and tell him you like him."
"Well, sure. I'll call him first thing tomorrow."
"Call him now."

"It's three o'clock in the morning!"
"It doesn't matter. He's waiting for you."

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When the executive called Toby, the phone was answered immediately. He heard Toby's voice say, "Hi."
The young executive swallowed and said, "I -- I Just wanted to tell you that I think you're great."
"Thanks, pal," Toby said, and hung up.

The size of Toby's entourage grew. Sometimes he would awaken in the middle of the night and telephone friends to come over for a gin game, or he would awaken O'Hanlon and Rainger and summon them to a story conference. He would often sit up all night running movies at home, with the three Macs and Clifton Lawrence and half a dozen starlets and hangers-on.
And the more people there were around him, the lonelier Toby became.
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It was November, 1963, and the autumn sunshine had given way to a thin, unwarming light from the sky. The early mornings were foggy and chilling now, and the first rains of winter had begun.
Jill Castle still stopped in at Schwab's every morning; but it seemed to her that the conversations were always the same. The Survivors talked about who had lost a part and why. They gloated over each disastrous review that came out and deprecated the good ones. It was the threnody of losers, and Jill began to wonder if she were becoming like the rest of them. She was still sure that she was going to be Somebody, but as she looked around at the same familiar faces, she realized they all felt the same way about themselves. Was it possible they were all out of touch with reality, all of them gambling on a dream that was never going to happen? She could not bear the thought of it.
Jill had become the mother confessor to the group. They came to her with problems, and she listened and tried to help; with advice, a few dollars or a place to sleep for a week or two. She seldom dated because she was absorbed in her career and she had not met anyone who interested her.

Whenever Jill was able to put a little money aside, she sent it to her mother with long, glowing letters about how well she was doing. In the beginning, Jill's mother had written back urging Jill to repent and become a bride of God. But as Jill made occasional movies and sent more money home, her

mother began to take a certain reluctant pride in her daughter's career. She was no longer against Jill's being an actress but she pressed Jill to get parts in religious pictures. "I'm sure Mr.

DeMille would give you a role if you explained your religious background to him," she wrote.
Odessa was a small town. Jill's mother still worked for the Oil People, and she knew that her mother would talk about her, that sooner or later David Kenyon would hear of her success. And so, in her letters, Jill made up stories about all the stars she worked with, always careful to use their first names. She learned the bit players' trick of having the set photographer snap her picture as she stood next to the star. The photographer would give her two prints and Jill would mail one to her mother and keep the other. She made her letters sound as though she was just one step short of stardom.

It is the custom in Southern California, where it never snows, that three weeks before Christmas a Santa Claus Parade marches down Hollywood Boulevard and that each night after that until Christmas Eve a Santa Claus float makes the journey. The citizens of Hollywood are as conscientious about the celebration of the Christ child as are their neighbors in northern climes. They are not to be held responsible if "Glory Beto God on High" and "Silent Night" and "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" pour out of home and car radios in a community that is sweltering in a temperature of eighty-five or ninety degrees. They long for an old-fashioned white Christmas as ardently as other red-blooded, patriotic Americans, but because they know that God is not going to supply it, they have learned to create their own. They festoon the streets with Christmas lights and plastic Christmas trees and papier-mache cutouts of Santa Claus and his sled and his reindeer. Stars and character actors vie for the privilege of riding in the Santa Claus Parade; not because they are concerned about bringing holiday cheer to the thousands of children and adults who line the path of the parade, but because

parade of floats go by, the stars on top waving to their loving fans below. The Grand Marshal of the parade this year was Toby Temple. The adoring crowds cheered wildly as his float passed by. Jill caught a quick glimpse of Toby's beaming, ingenuous face and then he was gone.
There was music from the Hollywood High School Band, followed by a Masonic Temple float, and a marine corps band. There were equestrians in cowboy outfits and a Salvation Army band, followed by Shriners. There were singing groups carrying flags and streamers, a Knott's Berry Farm float with animals and birds made of flowers; fire engines, clowns and jazz bands. It might not have been the spirit of Christmas, but it was pure Hollywood spectacle.
Jill had worked with some of the character actors on the floats. One of them waved to her and called down, "Hiya, JiU! Howyadoin'?"
Several people in the crowd turned to look enviously at her, and it gave her a delightful feeling of self-importance that people knew she was in the Business. A deep, rich voice

beside her said, "Excuse me -- are you an actress?"
JiU turned. The speaker was a tall blond, good-looking
boy in his middle twenties. His face was tanned and his teeth
white and even. He wore a pair of old jeans and a blue tweed
jacket with leather-patch elbows.
"Yes."
"Me, too. An actor, I mean." He grinned and added,
"Struggling."
JiU pointed to herself and said, "Struggling."
He laughed. "Can I buy you a cup of coffee?"
His name was Alan Preston and he came from Salt Lake
City where his father was an elder in the Mormon Church.
"I grew up with too much religion and not enough fun," he
confided to JiU.
It's almost prophetic, JiU thought. We have exactly the
same kind of background.
"I'm a good actor," Alan said ruefuUy, "but this is sure
a rough town. Back home, everybody wants to help you. Here,
it seems like everybody's out to get you."
They talked until the coffee shop closed, and by that

i me they were old friends. When Alan asked, "Do you want
o come back to my place?" Jill hesitated only a moment. "All
ight."
Alan Preston lived in a boardinghouse off Highland
}venue, two blocks from the Hollywood Bowl. He had a small
-oom at the back of the house.
"They ought to call this place The Dregs," he told JiU.
'You should see the weirdos who live here. They all think
hey're going to make it big in show business."
Like us, Jill thought.
The furniture in Alan's room consisted of a bed, a
'ureau, a chair and a small rickety table. "I'm just waiting
intil I move into my place," Alan explained.
Jill laughed. "Same with me."
Alan started to take her in his arms, and she stiffened.
"Please don't."
He looked at her a moment and said gently, "Okay," and
fill was suddenly embarrassed. What was she doing here in
this man's room, anyway? She knew the answer to that. She
was desperately lonely. She was hungry for someone to talk to,
hungry for the feel of a man's arms around her, holding her
and reassuring her and telling her that everything was going
to be wonderful. It had been so long. She thought of David
Kenyon, but that was another life, another world. She wanted
him so much that it was an ache. A little later, when Alan
Preston put his arms around Jill again, she closed her eyes and
It became David kissing her and undressing her and making
love to her.
Jill spent the night with Alan, and a few days later he
noved into her small apartment.

Alan Preston was the most uncomplicated man Jill had
ever met. He was easygoing and relaxed, taking each day as
it came, totally unconcerned with tomorrow. When Jill would
Tiscuss his way of life with him, he would say, "Hey, remem>er
Appointment in Samarra If it's going to happen, it'll
lappen. Fate will find you. You don't have to go looking for
it."
Alan would stay in bed long after Jill had gone out looking
for work. When she returned home, she would find him in
an easy chair, reading or drinking beer with his friends. He
brought no money into the house.
"You're a dope," one of JiU's girlfriends told her. "He's
using your bed, eating your food, drinking your liquor. Get rid
of him."
But Jill didn't.
For the first time, Jill understood Harriet, understood
all her friends who clung desperately to men they did not love,
men they hated.
It was the fear of being alone.

Jill was out of a job. Christmas was only a few days away
and she was down to her last few dollars, yet she had to send
her mother a Christmas present. It was Alan who solved the
problem. He had left early one morning without saying where
he was going. When he returned, he said to Jill, "We've got a
job."
"What kind of job?"
"Acting, of course. We're actors, aren't we?"
Jill looked at him, filled with sudden hope. "Are you
serious?"
"Of course I am. I ran into a friend of mine who's a
director. He's got a picture starting tomorrow. There's parts
for both of us. A hundred bucks apiece, for one day's work."
"That's wonderful!" Jill exclaimed. "A hundred dollars!"
With that she could buy her mother some lovely English wool
for a winter coat and have enough left over to buy a good
leather purse.
"It's just a little indie. They're shooting it in back of
someone's garage."
Jill said, "What can we lose? It's a part."

The garage was on the south side of Los Angeles, in an
area that in one generation had gone from exclusivity to
middle-class gentility to seed.
They were greeted at the door by a short, swarthy man
who took Alan's hand and said, "You made it, buddy. Great."
He turned to Jill and whistled appreciatively. "You told
it like it is, pal. She's an eyeful."

. Alan said, "Jill, this is Peter Terraglio. JiU Castle."
I "How do you do!" JiU said.

"Pete's the director," Alan explained.
"Director, producer, chief bottle washer. I do a little of everything. Come on in." He led them through the empty garage into a passageway that had at one time been servants' quarters. There were two bedrooms off the corridor. The door ;1 to one was open. As they approached it, they could hear the I sound of voices. JiU reached the doorway, looked inside and | stopped in shocked disbelief. In the middle of the room four j, naked people were lying on a bed; a black man, a Mexican man, and two girls, one white and one black. A cameraman was lighting the set while one of the girls practiced feUatio on the Mexican. The girl paused for a moment, out of breath, and said, "Come on, you cock. Get hard."
Jill felt faint. She wheeled around in the doorway to start back down the passageway, and she felt her legs start to give way. Alan had his arm around her, supporting her.
"Are you all right?"
She could not answer him. Her head was suddenly splitting, and her stomach was fiUed with knives.
"Wait here," Alan ordered.
He was back in a minute with a bottle of red pills and a pint of vodka. He took out two of the piUs and handed them to Jill. "These will make you feel better."
Jul put the piUs in her mouth, her head pounding.
"Wash it down with this," Alan told her.
She did as he said.
"Here." Alan handed her another pill. She swallowed it with vodka. "You need to lie down a minute."
He led JiU into the empty bedroom, and she lay down on the bed, moving very slowly. The piUs were beginning to work. She started to feel better. The bitter bile had stopped coming up into her mouth.
: Fifteen minutes later, her headache was fading away.
Alan handed her another piU. Without even thinking about it,
"I am sitting still."
JU1 thought that was funny and began to laugh. She laughed until the tears streamed down her face. "What -- what were those pills?"
"For your headache, honey."
Terraglio peered into the room and said, "How we doin'? Everybody happy?"
"Every -- everybody's happy," Jill mumbled.
Terraglio looked at Alan and nodded. "Five minutes," Terraglio said. He hurried off.
Alan was leaning over Jill, stroking her breast and her thighs, lifting her skirt and working his fingers between her legs. It felt marvelously exciting, and Jill suddenly wanted him inside her.
"Look, baby," Alan said, "I wouldn't ask you to do anything bad. You'd just make love to me. It's what we do anyway, only this time we get paid for it. Two hundred bucks. And it's all yours."
She shook her head, but it seemed to take forever to

move it from side to side. "I couldn't do that," she said, fuzzily.
"Why not?"
She had to concentrate to remember. "Because I'm --I'm gonna be a star. Can't do porno films."
"Would you like me to fuck you?"
"Oh, yes! I want you, David."
Alan started to say something, then grinned. "Sure, baby. I want you, too. Come on." He took Jill's hand and lifted her off the bed. Jill felt as though she were flying.
They were in the hallway, then moving into the other bedroom.
"Okay," Terraglio said as he saw them. "Keep the same setup. We've got some fresh blood coming in."
"Do you want me to change the sheets?" one of the crew asked.
"What the fuck do you think we are, MGM?"
Jill was clinging to Alan. "David, there are people here."
"They'll leave," Alan assured her. "Here." He took out another pill and gave it to Jill. He put the bottle of vodka

to her lips, and she swallowed the pill. From that point on, everything happened in a haze. David was undressing her and ' saying comforting things- Then she was on the bed with him. i He moved his naked body close to her. A bright light came on, blinding her.
"Put this in your mouth," he said, and it was David talking.
"Oh, yes." She stroked it lovingly and started to put it in her mouth and someone in the room said something that Jill could not hear, and David moved away so that Jill was forced to turn her face into the light and squint in the glare.
She felt herseJf being pushed down on her back and then David was inside her making love to her, and at the same time she had his penis in her mouth. She loved him so much.
The lights bothered her and the talking in the background.
She wanted to tell David to stop them, but she was in an ecstasy of delirium, having orgasm after orgasm until she thought that her body would tear itself apart. David loved her, not Cissy, and he had come back to her and they were married. They were having such a wonderful honeymoon.
"David..." she said. She opened her eyes and the Mexican was on top of her, moving his tongue down her body.
She tried to ask him where David was, but she could not get the words out. She closed her eyes while the man did delicious things to her body. When Jill opened her eyes again, the man had somehow turned into a girl with long red hair and large bosoms trailing across Jill's belly. Then the woman started doing something with her tongue and Jill dosed her eyes and fell into unconsciousness.

The two men stood looking down at the figure on the bed.
"She gonna be all right?" Terraglio asked.
"Sure," Alan said.
"You really come up with 'em," Terraglio said admiringly.
"She's terrific. Best looker yet."
"My pleasure." He held out his hand.
Terraglio pulled a thick wad of bills out of his pocket
and peeled off two of them. "Here y'are. Wanna drop by for a
little Christmas dinner? Stella'd love to see you."
"Can't," Alan said. "I'm spending Christmas with the
wife and kids. I'm catching the next plane out to Florida."
"We're gonna have a hell of a picture here." Terraglio
nodded toward the unconscious girl. "What kind of billing
should we give her ?"
Alan grinned. "Why don't you use her real name? It's
Josephine Czinski. When the picture plays in Odessa, it'll give
all her friends a real kick."

23

They had lied. Time was not a friend that healed all
wounds; it was the enemy that ravaged and murdered youth.
The seasons came and went and each season brought a new
crop of Product to Hollywood. The competition hitchhiked
and came on motorcycles and trains and planes. They were all eighteen years
old, as Jill had once been. They were longlegged
and lithe, with fresh, eager young faces and bright
smiles that did not need caps. And with each new crop that
came in, Jill was one year older. One day she looked in the
mirror and it was 1964 and she had become twenty-five years
old.
At first, the experience of making the pornographic film
had terrified her. She had lived in dread that some casting
director would learn about it and blackball her. But as the
weeks went by and then the months, Jill gradually forgot her
fears. But she had changed. Each succeeding year had left its
mark upon her, a patina of hardness, like the annual rings
on a tree. She began to hate all the people who would not give
her a chance to act, the people who made promises they never
kept.
She had embarked on an endless series of monotonous,
thankless jobs. She was a secretary and a receptionist and a
short-order cook and a baby-sitter and a model and a waitress
and a telephone operator and a salesgirl. Just until she got The
Call.
But The Call never came. And Jill's bitterness grew.
She did occasional walk-ons and one-liners, but they never led
to anything. She looked in the mirror and received Time's
message: Hurry. Seeing her reflection was like looking back
into layers of the past. There were still traces of the fresh
young girl who had come to Hollywood seven endless years

ago. But the fresh young girl had small wrinkles near the edges
of her eyes and deeper lines that ran from the corners of her
nose to her chin, warning signals of time fleeting and success
ungrasped, the souvenirs of all the countless dreary little
defeats. Hurry, fill, hurry!
And so it was that when Fred Kapper, an eighteen-yearold
assistant director at Fox, told Jill he had a good part for
her if she would go to bed with him, she decided it was time
to say yes.
She met Fred Kapper at the studio during his lunch
hour.
"I only got half an hour," he said. "Lenune think where
we can have some privacy." He stood there a moment, frowning
in deep thought, then brightened. "The dubbing room.
Come on."
The dubbing room was a small, soundproof projection
chamber where all the sound tracks were combined on one reel.
Fred Kapper looked around the bare room and said,
"Shit! They used to have a little couch in here." H^glanced
at his watch. "We'll have to make do. Get your clothes on,
sweetheart. The dubbing crew'U be back in twenty minutes."
Jill stared at him a moment, feeling like a whore, and
she loathed him. But she did not let it show. She had tried
it her way and had failed. Now she was going to do it their
way. She took off her dress and pants. Kapper did not bother
undressing. He merely opened his zipper and took out his
tumescent penis. He looked at Jill and grinned, "That's a
beautiful ass. Bend over."
Jill looked around for something to lean against. In front
of her was the laugh machine, a console on wheels, filled
with laugh-track loops controlled by buttons on the outside.
"Come on, bend over."
Jill hesitated a moment, then leaned forward, propping
herself up by her hands. Kapper moved in back of her and
Jill felt his fingers spreading her cheeks. An instant later she

|felt the rip of his penis pressing against her anus. "Wait!"
Ijill said. "Not there! I-- I can't --"
| "Scream for me, baby!" and he plunged his organ inside
|her, ripping her with a terrible pain. With each scream, he
|thrust deeper and harder. She tried frantically to get away,
|but he was grabbing her hips, shoving himself in and out,
'holding her fast. She was off balance now. As she reached out
'to get leverage, her fingers touched the buttons of the laugh
I'machine, and instantly the room was filled with maniacal
[laughter. As Jill squirmed in a burning agony, her hands
^pounded the machine, and a woman tittered and a small
crowd guffawed and a girl giggled and a hundred voices cackled
and chuckled and roared at some obscene, secret joke. The
echoes bounced hysterically around the walls as Jill cried out
with pain.

Suddenly she felt a series of quick shudders and a
moment later the alien piece of flesh inside her was withdrawn,
tod slowly the laughter in the room died away. Jill stayed
Still, her eyes shut, fighting the pain. When finally she was able
to straighten up and turn around, Fred Kapper was zipping
up his fly.
"You were sensational, sweetheart. That screaming really
turns me on."
And Jill wondered what kind of an animal he would be
when he was nineteen.
He saw that she was bleeding. "Get yourself cleaned up
and come over to Stage Twelve. You start working this
afternoon."
After that first experience, the rest was easy. Jill began
to work regularly at all the studios: Wamer Brothers, Paramount,
MGM, Universal, Columbia, Fox. Everywhere, in fact,
except at Disney, where sex did not exist.

i The role that Jill created in bed was a fantasy, and she
; acted it out with skill, preparing herself as though she were
i playing a part. She read books on Oriental erotica and bought
f philters and stimulants from a sex shop on Santa Monica
j Boulevard. She had a lotion that an airline stewardess brought
| her from the Orient, with the faintest touch of wintergreen in

it. She learned to massage her lovers slowly and sensuously.
"Lie there and think about what I'm doing to your body,"
she whispered. She rubbed the lotion across the man's chest
and down his stomach toward his groin, making gentle, circling
motions. "Close your eyes and enjoy it."
Her fingers were as light as butterfly wings, moving down
his body, caressing him. When he began to have an erection,
Jill would take his growing penis in her hand and softly stroke
it, moving her tongue down between his legs until he was
squirming with pleasure, then continuing down slowly, all the
way to his toes. Then Jill would turn him over, and it all
began again. When a man's organ was limp, she put the head
of it just inside the lips of her vagina, -and slowly drew him
inside her, feeling it grow hard and stiff. She taught the men
the waterfall, and how to peak and stop just before an orgasm
and then build again and peak again, so that when they finally
came, it was an ecstatic explosion. They had their pleasure
and got dressed and left. No one ever stayed long enough to
give her the loveliest five minutes in sex, the quiet holding
afterward, the peaceful oasis of a lover's arms.
Providing Jill with acting parts was a small price to pay
for the pleasure she gave the casting men, the assistant directors,
the directors and the producers. She became known
around town as a "red-hot piece of ass", and everyone was
eager for his share. And Jill gave it. Each time she did, there
was that much less self-respect and love in her, and that much
more hatred and bitterness.
She did not know how, or when, but she knew that one day this town would pay

for what it had done to her.

During the next five years, Jill appeared in dozens of movies and television shows and commercials. She was the secretary who said, "Good morning, Mr. Stevens", and the baby-sitter who said, "Don't worry now, you two have a good evening. I'll put the children to bed", and the elevator operator who announced, "Sixth floor next", and the girl in the ski outfit who confided, "All my girlfriends use Dainties". But nothing ever happened. She was a nameless face in the crowd. She was in the Business, and yet she was not, and she

could not bear the thought of spending the rest of her life like this.
In 1969 Jill's mother died and Jill drove to Odessa for the funeral. It was late afternoon and there were fewer than a dozen people at the service, none of them the women her mother had worked for all those years. Some of the churchgoers were there, the doom-saying revivalists. Jill remembered how terrified she had been at those meetings. But her mother had found some sort of solace in them, the exorcising of whatever demons had tormented her.
A familiar voice said quietly, "Hello, Josephine." She turned and he was standing'at her side and she looked into his eyes and it was as though they had never been apart, as though they still belonged to each other. The years had stamped a maturity on his face, added a sprinkling of gray to his sideburns. But he had not changed, he was sdll David, her David. Yet they were strangers.
He was saying, "I'm very sorry about your mother."
And she heard herself replying, "Thank you, David."
As though they were reciting lines from a play.
"I have to talk to you. Can you meet me tonight?" There was an urgent pleading in his voice.
She thought of Ae last time they had been together and of the hunger in him then and the promise and the dreams.
She said, "All right, David."
"The lake? Do you have a car?"
She nodded.
"I'll meet you there in an hour."

Qssy was standing in front of a mirror, naked, getting ready to dress for a dinner party when David arrived home.
He walked into her bedroom and stood there watching her.
He could judge his wife with complete dispassion, for he felt no emotion whatsoever toward her. She was beautiful. Cissy had taken care of her body, keeping it in shape with diet and exercise. It was her primary asset and David had reason to believe that she was liberal in sharing it with others, her golf coach, her ski teacher, her flight instructor. But David could

not blame her. It had been a long time since he had gone to bed
with Cissy.
In the beginning, he had really believed that she would
give him a divorce when Mama Kenyon died. But David's
mother was still alive and flourishing. David had no way of
knowing whether he had been tricked or whether a miracle had taken place. A
year after their marriage, David had said
to Cissy, "I think it's time we talked about that divorce."
Qssy had said, "What divorce?" And when she saw the
astonished, look on his face she laughed. "I like being Mrs.
David Kenyon, darling. Did you really think I was going to
give you up for that little Polish whore?"
He had slapped her.
The following day he had gone to see his attorney. When
David was finished talking, the attorney said, "I can get you
the divorce. But if Qssy is set on hanging on to you, David,
it's going to be bloody expensive."
"Get it."
When Cissy had been served the divorce papers, she
had locked herself in David's bathroom and had swallowed
an overdose of sleeping pills. It had taken David and two
servants to smash the heavy door. Cissy had hovered on the
brink of death for two days. David had visited her in the
private hospital where she had been taken.
"I'm sorry, David," she had said. "I don't want to live
without you. It's as simple as that."
The following morning, he had dropped the divorce suit.

That had been almost ten years ago, and David's marriage
had become an uneasy truce. He had completely taken
over the Kenyon empire and he devoted all of his energies
to running it. He found physical solace in the strings of girls
he kept in the various dties around the world to which his
business carried him. But he had never forgotten Josephine.
David had no idea how she felt about him. He wanted to
know, and yet he was afraid to find out. She had every reason
to hate him. When he had heard the news about Josephine's
mother, David had gone to the funeral parlor just to look at
Josephine. The moment he saw her, he knew that nothing had

changed. Not for him. The years had been swept away in an
instant, and he was as much in love with her as ever.
/ have to talk to you... meet me tonight.
All right, David....
The lake.

Cissy turned around as she saw David watching her in
die pier glass. "You'd better hurry and change, David. We'll
be late."
"I'm going to meet Josephine. If she'll have me, I'm
going to marry her. I think it's time this farce ended, don't

you?"
She stood there, staring at David, her naked image reflected in the mirror.
"Let me get dressed," she said.
David nodded and left the room. He walked into the large drawing room, pacing up and down, preparing for the confrontation. Surely after all these years. Cissy would not want to hang onto a marriage that was a hollow shell. He would give her anything she --
He heard the sound of Cissy's car starting and then the scream of ores as it careened down the driveway. David raced to the front door and looked out. Cissy's Maserati was racing toward the highway. Quickly, David got into his car, started the engine and gunned down the driveway after Cissy.
As he reached the highway, her car was just disappearing in the distance. He stepped down hard on the accelerator. The Maserari was a faster car than David's Rolls. He pressed down harder on the gas pedal: 70 ... 80... 90. Her car was no longer in sight.
xoo... no ... still no sign of her.
I He reached the top of a small rise, and there he saw the (car, like a distant toy, careening around a curve. The torque was pulling the car to one side, the tires fighting to hold their traction on the road. The Maserati swayed back and forth, yawing across the highway. Then it leveled off and made it Ethe curve. And suddenly the car hit tfae shoulder of the and shot into the air like a catapult and rolled over and across the fields.
David pulled Cissy's unconscious body out of the car moments before the ruptured gas tank exploded.
It was six o'clock the next morning before the chief surgeon came out of the operating room and said to David, "She's going to live."

Jill arrived at the lake just before sunset. She drove to the edge of the water. Turning off the motor, she gave herself up to the sounds of the wind and the air. / don't know when I've ever been so happy, she thought. And then she corrected herself. Yes, I do. Here. With David. And she remembered how his body had felt on hers and she grew faint with wanting. Whatever had spoiled their happiness was over. She had felt it the moment she had seen David. He was still in love with her. She knew it.
She watched the blood-red sun slowly drown, in the distant water, and darkness fell. She wished that David would hurry.
An hour passed, then two, and the air became chilled. She sat in the car, still and quiet. She watched the huge dead-white moon float into the sky. She listened to the night sounds all around her and she said to herself, David is coming.
Jill sat there all night and, in the morning, when the sun began to stain the horizon, she started the car and drove home to Hollywood.

186

24

Jill sat in front of her dressing table and studied her face
in the mirror. She saw a barely perceptible wrinkle at the
corner of her eye and frowned. It's unfair, she thought. A man
can completely let himself go. He can have gray hair, a potbelly
and a face like a road map, and no one thinks anything
of it. But let a woman get one tiny wrinkle... She began to
apply her makeup. Bob Schiffer, Hollywood's top makeup
artist, had taught her some of his techniques. Jill put on a
pan-stick base instead of the powder base that she had once
used. Powder dried the skin, while the pan-stick kept it moist.
Next, she concentrated on her eyes, the makeup under her
lower lids three or four shades lighter than her other makeup,
so that the shadows were softened. She rubbed in a small
amount of eye shadow to give her eyes more color, then carefully
applied false eyelashes over her own lashes, tilting them
at the outer edges at 'a forty-five-degree angle. She brushed
some Duo adhesive on her own outer lashes and joined them
with the false lashes, making the eyes look larger. To give the
lashes a fuller look, she drew fine dots on her lower eyelid
beneath her own lashes. After that, Jill applied her lipstick,
then powdered her lips before applying a second coat of lipj
stick. She applied a blusher to her cheeks and dusted her face
[with powder, avoiding the areas around the eyes where the
[! powder would accentuate the faint wrinkles.
Jill sat back in her chair and studied the effect in the
mirror. She looked beautiful. Someday, she would have to
resort to the tape trick, but thank God that was still years
away. Jill knew of older actresses who used the trick. They
fastened tiny pieces of Scotch tape to their skin just below
the hairline. Attached to these tapes were threads which they
tied around their heads and concealed beneath their hair. The
result was to pull the slackened skin of their faces taut, giving
the effect of a face lift without the expense and pain of surgery.
A variation was also used to disguise their sagging breasts.
A piece of tape attached to the breast on one end and to the
firmer flesh higher on the chest on the other provided a simple
temporary solution to the problem. Jill's breasts were still firm.
She finished combing her soft, black hair, took one final
look in the mirror, glanced at her watch and realized that she
would have to hurry.
She had an interview for "The Toby Temple Show".

188

25

Eddie Berrigan, the casting director for Toby's show,
was a married man. He had made arrangements to use a

friend's apartment three afternoons a week. One of the afteroons was reserved for Berrigan's mistress and the other two afternoons were reserved for what he called "old talent" and "new talent".
Jill Castle was new talent. Several buddies had told Eddie that Jill gave a fantastic "trip around the world" and wonderful head. Eddie had been eager to try her. Now, a part in a sketch had come up that was right for her. All the character had to do was look sexy, say a few lines and exit.
Jill read for Eddie and he was satisfied. She was no Kate Hepbum, but the role didn't call for one. "You're in," he said.
"Thank you, Eddie."
"Here's your script. Rehearsal starts tomorrow morning, ten o'clock sharp. Be on time, and know your lines."
"Of course." She waited.
"Er -- how about meeting me this afternoon for a cup of coffee?"
| Jfflnodded.
| "A friend of mine has an apartment at ninety-five thirteen ; Argyle. The Allerton."
"I know where it is," Jill said.
: "Apartment Six D. Three o'clock."
show. That week's talent included a spectacular dance team from Argentina, a popular rock and roll group, a magician who made everything in sight disappear and a top vocalist. The only one missing was Toby Temple. Jill asked Eddie Berrigan about Toby's absence. "Is he sick?"
Eddie snorted. "He's sick like a fox. The peasants rehearse while old Toby has himself a ball. He'll show up Saturday to tape the show, and then split."

Toby Temple appeared on Saturday morning, breezing into the studio like a king. From a corner of the stage, Jill watched him make his entrance, followed by his three stooges, Clifton Lawrence and a couple of old-time comics. The spectacle filled Jill with contempt. She knew all about Toby Temple. He was an egomaniac who, according to rumor, bragged that he had been to bed with every pretty actress in Hollywood. No one ever said no to him. Oh, yes, Jill knew about the Great Toby Temple.
The director, a short, nervous man named Harry Durkin, introduced the cast to Toby. Toby had worked with most of them. Hollywood was a small village, and the faces soon became familiar. Toby had not met Jill Castle before. She looked beautiful in a biege linen dress, cool and elegant.
"What are you doing, honey?" Toby asked.
"I'm in the astronaut sketch, Mi. Temple."
He gave her a warm smile and said, "My friends call me Toby."

The cast started to work. The rehearsal went unusually well, and Durkin quickly realized why. Toby was showing

off for Jill. He had laid every other girl in the show, and Jill
was a new challenge.
The sketch that Toby did with Jill was the high point
of the show. Toby gave Jill a couple of additional lines and
a funny piece of business. When rehearsal was over, Toby
said to her, "How about a little drink in my dressing room?"
"Thank you, I don't drink." Jill smiled and walked away.
She had a date with a casting director and that was more

important than Toby Temple. He was a one-shot. A casting
director meant steady employment.
When they taped the show that evening it was an enormous
success, one of the best shows Toby had ever done.
"Another smash," Clifton told Toby. "That astronaut
sketch was top drawer."
Toby grinned. "Yeah. I like that little chick in it. She's
got something."
"She's pretty," Clifton said. Every week there was a different
girl. They all had something, and they all went to bed
with Toby and became yesterday's conversation piece.
"Fix it for her to have supper with us. Cliff."
It was not a request. It was a command. A few years ago,
Clifton would have told Toby to do it himself. But these days,
when Toby asked you to do something, you did it. He was a
king and this was his kingdom, and those who did not want to
be exiled stayed in his favor.
"Of course, Toby," Clifton said. "I'll arrange it."
Clifton walked down the hall to the dressing room where
the girl dancers and female members of the cast changed. He
rapped once on the door and walked in. There were a dozen
girls in the room in various stages of undress. They paid no
attention to him except to call out greetings. Jill had removed
her makeup and was getting into her street clothes. Clifton
walked up to her. "You were very good," he said.
Jill glanced at him in the mirror without interest.
"Thanks." At one time she would have been exdted to be this
dose to Clifton Lawrence. He could have opened every door
in Hollywood for her. Now everyone knew that he was simply
Toby Temple's stooge.
"I have some good news for you. Mr. Temple wants you
to join him for supper."
Jill lightly tousled her hair with her fingertips and said,
"Tell him I'm tired. I'm going to bed." And she .walked out.

| Supper that evening was a misery. Toby, Clifton Law- trence and Durkin, the director, were in La Rue's at a front
[booth. Durkin had suggested inviting a couple of the showgirls,
|but Toby had furiously rejected the idea.

The table captain was saying, "Are you ready to order,
Mr. Temple?"

Toby pointed to Clifton and said, "Yeah. Give the idiot here'aa-order of tongue."
Clifton joined the laughter of the others at the table, pretending that Toby was simply being amusing.
Toby snapped, ,"I asked you to do a simple thing like inviting a girl to dinner. Who told you to scare her off?"
"She was tired," Clifton explained. "She said --"
"No broad is too tired to have dinner with me. You must have said something that pissed her off." Toby had raised his voice. The people at the next booth had turned to stare. Toby gave them his boyish smile and said, "This is a farewell dinner, folks." He pointed at Clifton. "He's donated his brain to the zoo."
There was laughter from the other table. Clifton, forced a grin, but under the table his hands were clenched.
"Do you want to know how dumb he is?" Toby asked the people at the adjoining booth. "In Poland, they tell jokes about him."
The laughter increased. Clifton wanted to get up and walk out, but he did not dare. Durkin sat there embarrassed, too wise to say anything. Toby now had the attention of several nearby booths. He raised his voice again, giving them his charming smile. "Cliff Lawrence here gets his stupidity honestly. When he was born, his parents had a big fight over him. His mother claimed it wasn't her baby."
Mercifully, the evening finally came to an end. But tomorrow Clifton Lawrence stories were going to be told all over town.
Clifton Lawrence lay in his bed that night, unable to sleep. He asked himself why he allowed Toby to humiliate him. The answer was simple: money. The income from Toby Temple brought him over a quarter of a million dollars a year. Clifton lived expensively and generously, and he had not saved a cent. With his other clients gone, he needed Toby. That was the problem. Toby knew it, and baiting Clifton had become a blood sport. Clifton had to get away before it was too late.

But he was aware that it was already too late.
He had been trapped into this situation because of his affection for Toby: he had really loved him. He had watched Toby destroy others--women who had fallen in love with him, comics who had tried to compete with him, critics who had panned him. But those were others. Clifton had never believed that Toby would turn on him. He and Toby were too close, Clifton had done too much for him.
He dreaded to think about what the future held.

Ordinarily, Toby would not have given Jill Castle more than a second glance. But Toby was not used to being denied anything he wanted. Jill's refusal only acted as a goad. He

invited her to dinner again. When she declined, Toby
shrugged it off as some kind of stupid game she was playing
and decided to forget about her. The irony was that if it had
been a game, Jill would never have been able to deceive Toby,
because Toby understood women too well. No, he sensed that
Jill really did not want to go out with him, and the thought
galled him. He was unable to get her out of his mind.
Casually, Toby mentioned to Eddie Berrigan that it might
be a good idea to use Jill Castle on the show again. Eddie
telephoned her. She told him she was busy doing a bit role
in a Western. When Eddie reported back to Toby, the
comedian was furious.
"Tell her to cancel whatever she's doing," he snapped.
"We'll pay her more. For Christ's sake, this is the number
one show on the air. What's the matter with that dizzy
broad?"
Eddie called Jill again and told her-how Toby felt. "He
really wants you back on the show, Jill. Can you make it?"
"I'm sorry," Jill said. "I'm doing a part at Universal. I
ican't get out of it."
^ Nor would she try. An actress did not get ahead in
JHollywood by walking out on a studio. Toby Temple meant
Jnothing to Jill except a day's work. The following evening,
jthe Great Man himself telephoned her. His voice on the telejphone
was warm and charming.
"Jill ? This is your little old co-star, Toby."

"Hello, Mr. Temple."
"Hey, come on! What's with the 'mister' bit?" There
was no response. "Do you like baseball?" Toby asked. "I've
got box seats for --"
"No, I don't."
"Neither do I." He laughed. "I was testing you. Listen,
how about having dinner with me Saturday night? I stole
my chef from Maxim's in Paris. He --"
"I'm sorry. I have a date, Mr. Temple." There was not
even a flicker of interest in her voice.
Toby felt himself gripping the receiver more tightly.
"When are you free?"
"I'm a hard-working girl. I don't go out much. But thank
you for asking me."
And the line went dead. The bitch had hung up on him
-- a fucking bit player had hung up on Toby Temple! .There
was not a woman Toby had met who would not give a year
of her life to spend one night with him -- and this stupid cunt
had turned him down! He was in a violent rage, and he took
it out on everyone around him. Nothing was right. The script
stank, the director was an idiot, the music was terrible and the
actors were lousy. He summoned Eddie Berrigan, the casting
director, to his dressing room.
"What do you know about Jill Castle?" Toby demanded.

"Nothing," Eddie said 'instantly. He was not a fool. Like
everyone else on the show, he knew exactly what was going on.
Whichever way it turned out, he had no intention of getting
caught in the middle.
"Does she sleep around?"
"No, sir," Eddie said firmly. "If she did, I'd know about
it."
"I want you to check her out," Toby ordered. "Find out
if she's got a boyfriend, where she goes, what she does -- you
know what I want."
"Yes, sir," Eddie said earnestly.
At three o'clock the next morning, Eddie was awakened
by the telephone at his bedside.
"What did you find out?" a voice asked.
Eddie sat up in bed, trying to blink himself awake. "Who

the hell -- ?" He suddenly realized who was at the other end of
the telephone. "I checked," Eddie said hastily. "She's got a
clean bill of health."
"I didn't ask you fc-r her fucking medical certificate,"
Toby snapped. "Is she laying anybody?"
"No, sir. Nobody. I talked to my buddies around town.
They all like Jill and they use her because she's a fine actress."
He was talking faster now, anxious to convince the man at the
other end of the phone. If Toby Temple ever learned that Jill
had slept with Eddie -- had chosen him over Toby Temple! --
Eddie would never work in this town again. He had talked to
his casting-director friends, and they were all in the same
position he was. No one wanted to make an enemy of Toby
Temple, so they had agreed on a conspiracy of silence. "She
doesn't play around with anybody."
Toby's voice softened. "I see. I guess she's just some kind
of crazy kid, huh?"
"I guess she is," said Eddie, relieved.
"Hey! I hope I didn't wake you up?"
"No, no, that's all right, Mr. Temple."
But Eddie lay awake a long time, contemplating what
could happen to him if the truth ever came out.
For this was Toby Temple's town.

Toby and Clifton Lawrence were having lunch at the
Hillcrest Country Club. Hillcrest had been created because
few of the top country clubs in Los Angeles admitted Jews.
This policy was so rigidly observed that Groucho Marx's ten year-old
child, Melinda, had been ordered out of the swimming
pool of a club where a Gentile friend had taken her. When
Groucho heard what had happened, he telephoned the manager
of the club and said, "Listen -- my daughter's only half-Jewish.
Would you let her go into the pool up to her waist?"
As a result of incidents like this, some affluent Jews who
enjoyed golf, tennis, gin rummy and baiting anti-Senrites got

together and formed their own club, selling shares exclusively
to Jewish members. Hillcrest was built in a beautiful park
a few miles from the heart of Beverly Hills, and it quickly became
famous for having the best buffet and the most stunulat-
ing conversation in town. The Gentiles clamored to be
admitted. In a gesture toward tolerance, the board ruled that
a few non-Jews would be allowed to join the dub.
Toby always sat at the comedians' table, where the Hollywood
wits gathered to exchange jokes and top one another. But
today Toby had other things on his mind. He took Clifton to
a corner table. "I need your advice. Cliff," Toby said.
The little agent glanced up at him in surprise. It had
been a long dme since Toby had asked for his advice. "Certainly,
dear boy."
"It's this girl," Toby began, and Clifton was instantly
ahead of him. Half the town knew the story by now. It was
the biggest joke in Hollywood. One of the columnists had
even run it as a blind item. Toby had read it and commented,
"I wonder who the schmuck is?" The great lover was hooked
on a girl on the town who had turned him down. There was
only one way to handle this situation.
"Jill Castle," Toby was saying, "remember her? The kid
who was on the show?"
"Ah, yes, a very attractive girl. What's the problem?"
"I'll be god damned if I know," Toby admitted. "It's like
she's got something against me. Every time I ask her for a
date, I get a turn-down. It makes me feel like some kind of
shit-kicker from Iowa."
Clifton took a chance. "Why don't you stop asking her?"
"That's the crazy part, pal. I can't. Between you and me
and my cock, I've never wanted a broad so much in my life.
It's getting so I can't think about anything else." He smiled
self-consciously and said, "I told you it was crazy. You've
been around the track a few times, Cliff. What do I do?"
For one reckless moment, Clifton was tempted to tell
Toby the truth. But he couldn't tell him that his dream girl
was sleeping around town with every assistant casting director
who could give her a day's work. Not if he wanted to keep
Toby as a client. "I have an idea," Clifton suggested. "Is she
serious about her acting?"
"Yes. She's ambitious."
"All right. Then, give her an invitation she has to
accept."

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^What do you mean?"
"Have a party at your house."
"I just told you, she won't --"
"Let me finish. Invite studio heads, producers, directors
-people who could do her some good. If she's really inter- sted in being an
actress, she'll be dying to meet them."

Toby dialed her number. "Hello, Jill."
"Who is this?" she asked.
Everyone in the country recognized his voice, and she
'as asking who it was!
'Toby. Toby Temple."
"Oh." It was a sound that could have meant anything.
"Listen, Jill, I'm giving a little dinner party at my home
ext Wednesday night and I" -- he heard her start to refuse
nd hurried on--"I'm having Sam Winters, head of Pan'adfic,
and a few other studio heads there, and some pro- ucers and directors. I thought it might be good for you to
ieet them. Are you free?"
There was the briefest of pauses, and Jifl Castle said,
Wednesday night. Yes, I'm free. Thank you, Toby."
An neither of them knew that it was an appointment
i Samarra.

On the terrace, an orchestra played, while liveried waiters
assed trays of hors d'oeuvres and glasses of champagne.
When Jill arrived forty-five minutes late, Toby nervously
urried to the door to meet her. She was wearing a simple
'bite silk dress, and her black hair fell softly against her
boulders. She looked ravishing. Toby could not take his eyes
if her. Jill was aware that she looked beautiful. She had
rashed and styled her hair very carefully and had taken a
mg time with her makeup.
"There are a lot of people here I want you to meet."
Foby took Jill's hand and led her across the large reception
all into the formal drawing room. Jill stopped at the entrance,
taring at the guests. Almost every face in the room was
amiliar to her. She had seen them on the cover of Time and
LIFE and Newsweek and Paris Match and OGGI or on the
screen. This was the real Hollywood. These were the picture
makers. Jill had imagined this moment a thousand times, being
with these people, talking with them. Now that the reality
was here, it was difficult for her to realize that it was actually
happening.
Toby was handing her a glass of champagne. He took
her arm and led her to a man surrounded by a group of people.
"Sam, I want you to meet Jill Castle."
Sam turned. "Hello, Jill Castle," he said pleasantly.
"Jill, this is Sam Winters, chief Indian of Pan-Pacific
Studios."
"I know who Mr. Winters is," Jill said.
"Jill's an actress, Sam, a damned clever actress. You could
use her. Give your joint a little class."
"I'll keep that in mind," Sam said politely.
Toby took Jill's hand, holding it firmly. "Come on,
honey," he said. "I want everybody to meet you,"
Before the evening was over, Jill had met three studio
heads, half a dozen important producers, three directors, a
few writers, several newspaper and television columnists and
a dozen stars. At dinner, Jill sat at Toby's right. She listened

to the various conversations, savoring the feeling of being on the Inside for the first time.

"... the trouble with these epics is that if one of them flops, it can wipe out the whole studio. Fox is hanging on by its teeth, waiting to see what Cleopatra does."

"... have you seen the new Billy Wilder picture yet? Sensational!"

"Yeah? I liked him better when he was working with Brackett. Brackett has class."

"Billy has talent,"

"... so, I sent Peck a mystery script last week, and he's crazy about it. He said he'd give me a definite answer in a day or two."

"... I received this invitation to meet the new guru, Krishi Pramananada. Well, my dear, it turned out I'd already met him; I attended his bar mitzvah."

"... the problem with budgeting a picture at two is that by the time you have an answer print, the cost of inflation

plus the god damned unions has pushed it up to three or four."

Millions, Jill thought excitedly. Three or four millions. She remembered the endless penny-ante conversations at Schwab's where the hangers-on, the Survivors, avidly fed each other crumbs of information about what the studios were doing. Well, the people at this table tonight were the real survivors, the ones who made everything in Hollywood happen.

These were the people who had kept the gates shut against her, who had refused to give her a chance. Any person at this table could have helped her, could have changed her i life, but none of them had had five minutes to spare for Jill Castle. She looked over at a producer who was riding high with a big new musical picture. He had refused to give Jill even ; an interview.

At the far end of the table, a famous comedy director was in animated conversation with the star of his latest film. } He had refused to see Jill.

} Sam Winters was talking to the head of another studio.

; Jill had sent a telegram to Winters, asking him to watch her I performance on a television show. He had never bothered f answering.

| They would pay for their slights and insults, they and y everybody else in this town who had treated her so shabbily.

| Right now, she meant nothing to the people here, but she } would. Oh, yes. One day she would.

; The food was superb, but Jill was too preoccupied to notice what she ate. When dinner was over, Toby rose and ;«aid, "Hey! We better hurry before they start the picture without us." Holding Jill's arm, he led the way to the large ^projection room where they were to watch a movie.

; The room was arranged so Aat sixty people could comIbrtably
view the picture in couches and easy chairs. An open
cabinet filled with candy bars stood at one side of the enice.
A popcorn machine stood on the other side.
Toby had seated himself next to Jill. She was aware
: all through the screening his eyes were on her rather
on &e movie. When the picture ended and the lights
went up, coffee and cake were served. Half an hour later, the
party began to dissolve. Most of the guests had early studio
calls.
Toby was standing at the front door saying good night to
Sam Winters when Jill walked up, wearing her coat. "Where
are you going?" Toby demanded. "I'm gonna take you
home."
"I have my car," Jill answered, sweetly. "Thank you for
a lovely evening, Toby." And she left.
Toby stood there in disbelief, watching her drive away.
He had made exciting plans for the rest of the evening. He
was going to take Jill upstairs to the bedroom and--he had
even picked out the tapes he was going to play! Any woman
here tonight would have been grateful to jump into my bed,
Toby thought. They were stars, too, not some dumb bit player.
Jill Castle was just too damned stupid to know what she was
turning down. It was over as far as Toby was concerned. He
had learned his lesson.
He was never going to talk to Jill again.

Toby telephoned Jill at nine o'clock the next morning,
and he was answered by a tape-recorded message. "Hello, this
is Jill Castle. I'm sorry I'm not at home now. If you'll leave
your name and telephone number, I'll call you back when
I return. Please wait until you hear the signal. Thank you."
There was a sharp beep.
Toby stood there clutching the telephone in his hand,
then slammed down the receiver without leaving a message.
He was damned if he was going to carry on a conversation
with a mechanical voice. A moment later, he redialed the
number. He listened to the recording again and spoke. "You've
got the cutest voice-over in town. You should package it.
I don't usually call back girls who eat and run, but in your
case, I've decided to make an exception. What are you doing
for dinner to --?" The phone went dead. He had talked too
long for the god damned tape. He froze, not knowing what to
do, feeling like a fool. It infuriated him to have to call back
again, but he dialed the number for the third time and said,
"As I was saying before the rabbi cut me off, how about

tinner tonight? I'll wait for your call." He left his number
nd bung up.
Toby waited restlessly all day and did not hear from her.
ly seven o'clock, he thought, To hell with you. That was

'our last chance, baby. And this time it was final. He took
ut his private phone book and began to thumb through it.
rhere was no one in it who interested him.

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It was the most tremendous role in Jill's life.
She had no idea why Toby wanted her so much when
he could have any girl in Hollywood, nor did the reason matter.
The fact was that he did. For days Jill had been able to think
of nothing but the dinner party and how everyone there -- all
those important people--had catered to Toby. They would
do anything for him. Somehow, Jill had to find a way to make
Toby do anything for her. She knew she had to be very clever.
Toby's reputation was that once he took a girl to bed, he lost
interest in her. It was the pursuit he enjoyed, the challenge.
Jill spent a great deal of dme thinking about Toby and about
how she was going to handle him.
Toby telephoned her every day and she let a week go by
before she agreed to have dinner with him again. He was in
such a euphoric state that everyone in the cast and crew commented
on it.
"If there were such an animal," Toby told Clifton, "I'd
say I was in love. Every time I think about Jill, 1 get an
erection." He grinned and added, "And when I get an erection,
pal, it's like putting up a billboard on Hollywood
Boulevard."

The night of their first date, Toby picked Jill up at her
apartment and said, "We have a table at Chasen's." He was
sure it would be a treat for her.
"Oh?" There was a note of disappointment in Jill's
voice.

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He blinked. "Is there someplace else you'd rather go?"
It was Saturday night, but Toby knew he could get a table
anywhere: Perino's, the Ambassador, the Derby. "Name it."
JUl hesitated, then said, "You'll laugh."
"No, I won't."
"Tommy's."

Toby was getting a poolside massage from one of the
Macs, while Clifton Lawrence looked on. "You wouldn't believe
it," Toby marveled. "We stood in line at that hamburger
joint for twenty minutes. Do you know where the hell
Tommy's is? Downtown Los Angeles. The only people who
go downtown Los Angeles are wetbacks. She's crazy. I'm
ready to blow a hundred bucks on her with French champagne
and the whole bit, and the evening costs me two dollars and

forty cents. I wanted to take her to Pip's afterward. Do you
know what we did instead? We walked along the beach at
Santa Monica. I got sand in my Guccis. No one walks along
the beach at night. You get mugged by scuba divers." He
shook his head in admiration. "Jill Castle. Do you believe her?"
"No," Clifton said dryly.
"She wouldn't come back to my place for a little nightcap,
so I figured I'd get in the kip at her place, right?"
"Right."
"Wrong. She doesn't even let me in the door. I get a
kiss on my cheek and I'm on my way home, alone. Now what
the hell kind of night out on the town is that for Charlie- superstar?"
"Are you gonna see her again?"
"Are you demented? You bet your sweet ass I ami"

After that, Toby and Jill were together almost every
night. When Jill would tell Toby she could not see him
because she was busy or had an early morning call, Toby
would be in despair. He telephoned Jill a dozen times a day.
He took her to the most glamorous restaurants and the
most exclusive private clubs in town. In return, Jill took him
to the old boardwalk in Santa Monica and the Trancas Inn
and the little French family restaurant called Taix and to
Papa DeCarlos and all the other out-of-the-way places a struggling
actress with no money learns about. Toby did not care
where he went, as long as Jill was with him.
She was the first person he had ever known who made
his feeling of loneliness vanish.

Toby was almost afraid to go to bed with Jill now, for
fear the magic might disappear. And yet h&^wanted her more
than he had ever desired any woman in his life. Once, at the
end of an evening, when Jill was giving him a light good night
kiss, Toby reached between her legs and said, "God, Jill, I'll
go crazy if I can't have you." She pulled back and said coldly,
"If that's all you want, you can buy it anywhere in town for
twenty dollars." She slammed the door in his face. Afterward,
she leaned against the door, trembling, afraid that she had
gone too far. She lay awake all night, worrying.
The next day Toby sent her a diamond bracelet, 'and
Jill knew that everything was all right. She returned the
bracelet with a carefully thought-out note. "Thank you, anyway.
You make me feel very beautiful."
"It cost me three grand," Toby told Clifton proudly,
"and she sent it back!" He shook his head incredulously.
"What do you think of a girl like that?"
Clifton could have told him exactly what he thought,
but all he said was, "She's certainly unusual, dear boy."
"Unusual!" Toby exclaimed. "Every broad in this town
is on the make for everything they can get their hot little
hands on. Jill is the first girl I've ever met who doesn't give
a damn about material things. Do you blame me for being
crazy about her?"

"No," Clifton said. But he was beginning to get worried.
He knew all about Jill, and he wondered if he should not
have spoken up sooner.
"I wouldn't object if you wanted to take Jill on as a
client," Toby said to Clifton. "I'll bet she could be a big star."
Clifton parried it deftly but firmly. "No, thanks, Toby.
One superstar on my hands is enough." He laughed.
That night Toby repeated the remark to Jill.
* «

After his unsuccessful attempt with Jill, Toby was careful
not to broach the subject of their going to bed together. Toby
was actually proud of Jill for refusing him. All the other girls
he had gone with had been doormats. But not Jill. When Toby
did something Jill thought was out of line, she told him so.
One night Toby tongue-lashed a man who was pestering him
for an autograph. Later, Jill said, "It's funny when you're
sarcastic on stage, Toby, but you hurt that man's feelings."
Toby had gone back to the man and apologized.
Jill told Toby that she thought his drinking so much was
not good for him. He cut down on his consumption. She made
a casually critical remark about his clothes, and he changed
tailors. Toby allowed Jill to say things that he would not have
tolerated from anyone else in the world. No one had ever
dared boss him around or criticize him.
Except, of course, his mother.

Jill refused to accept money or expensive gifts from Toby,
but he knew that she could not have much money, and her
courageous behavior made Toby even more proud of her. One
evening at Jill's apartment, while Toby was waiting for her
to finish dressing before dinner, he noticed a stack of bills in
the living room. Toby slipped them into his pocket and the
next day ordered Clifton to pay them. Toby felt as though
he had scored a victory. But he wanted to do something big
for Jill, something important.
And he suddenly knew what it was going to be.

"Sam--I'm going to do you a great big favor!"
Beware of stars bearing gifts, Sam Winters thought
wryly.
"You've been going crazy looking for a girl for Keller's
picture, right?" Toby asked. "Well, I got her for you."
"Anyone I know?" Sam inquired.
"You met her at my house. Jill Castle."
Sam remembered Jill. Beautiful face and figure, black
hair. Far too old to play the teen-ager in the Keller movie.
But if Toby Temple wanted her to test for the part, Sam

was going to oblige. "Have her come in to see me this afternoon,"
he said.

Sam saw to it that Jill Castle's test was carefully handled.
She was given one of the studio's top-cameramen, and Keller
himself directed the test.
Sam looked at the rushes the following day. As he had
guessed, Jill was too mature for the part of the young girl.
Aside from that, she was not bad. What she lacked was
charisma, the magic that leaped out from the screen.
He telephoned Toby Temple. "I looked at Jill's test this
morning, Toby. She photographs well, and she can read lines,
but she's not a leading lady. She could earn a good living
playing minor roles, but if she has her heart set on becoming
a star, I think she's in the wrong business."
Toby picked up Jill that evening to take her to a dinner
being given for a celebrated English director who had just
arrived in Hollywood. Jill had been looking forward to it.
She opened the door for Toby and the moment he entered
she knew that something was wrong. "You heard some
news about my test," she said.
He nodded reluctantly. "I talked to Sam Winters." He
told her what Sam had said, trying to soften the blow.
Jill stood there listening, not saying a word. She had
been so sure. The part had felt so right. Out of nowhere
came the memory of the gold cup in the department-store
window. The little girl had ached with the wanting and the
loss; Jill felt the same feeling of despair now.
Toby was saying, "Look, honey, don't worry about it.
Winters doesn't know what he's talking about."
But he did know! She was not going to make it. All
the agony and the pain and the hope had been for nothing.
It was as though her mother had been right and a vengeful
God was punishing Jill for she knew not what. She could hear
the preacher screaming. See that little girl? She will bum in
Hell for her sins if she does not give her soul up to God and
repent. She had come to this town with love and dreams, and
the town had degraded her.
She was overcome with an unbearable feeling of sadness

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and she was not even aware that she was sobbing until she
felt Toby's arm around her.
"Sh! It's all right," he said, and his gentleness made her
cry £11 the harder.
She stood there while he held her in his arms and she
told him about her father dying when she was born, and about
the gold cup and the Holy Rollers and the headaches and the
nights filled with terror while she waited for God to strike
her dead. She told him about the endless, dreary jobs she had
taken in order to become an actress and the series of failures.
Some deep-rooted instinct kept her from mentioning the men
in her life. Although she had started out playing a game with
Toby, she was now beyond pretense. It was in this moment of

her naked vulnerability that she reached-him. She touched a
chord deep within him that no one else had ever struck.
He took out his pocket handkerchief and dried her tears.
"Hey, if you think you had it tough," he said, "listen to this.
My old man was a butcher and..."
They talked until three o'clock in the morning. It was
the first time in his life Toby had talked to a girl as a human
being. He understood her. How could he not; she was
him.
Neither of them ever knew who made the first move.
What had started as a gentle, understanding comforting slowly
became a sensual, animal wanting. They were kissing hungrily,
and he was holding her tightly. She could feel his maleness
pressing against her. She needed him and he was taking off her
clothes, and she was helping him and then he was naked in
the dark beside her, and there was an urgency in both of them.
They went to the floor. Toby entered her and Jill moaned
once at the enormous size of him, and Toby started to withdraw.
She pulled him closer to her, holding him fiercely. He
began to make love to her then, filling her, completing her,
making her body whole. It was gentle and loving and it kept
building and became frantic and demanding and suddenly it
was beyond that. It was an ecstasy, an unbearable rapture, a
mindless animal coupling, and Jill was screaming, "Love me,
Toby! Love me, love me!" His pounding body was on her, in
her, was part of her, and they were one.

They made love all night and talked and laughed, and it
was as though they had belonged together always.
If Toby had thought he cared for Jill before, he was
insane about her now. They lay in bed, and he held her ia his
arms protectively, and he thought wonderingly. This is what
love is. He turned to gaze at her. She looked warm and
disheveled and breathtakingly beautiful, and he had never loved
anyone so much. He said, "I want to marry"you." }
It was the most natural thing in the world.
She hugged him tightly and said, "Oh, yes, Toby." She
loved him and she was going to many him.
And it was not until hours later that Jill remembered
why all this had started in the first place. She had wanted
Toby's power. She had wanted to pay back all the people
who had used her, hurt her, degraded her. She had wanted
vengeance.
Now she was going to have it.

27

Clifton Lawrence was in trouble. In a way, he supposed,
it was his own fault for letting things get this far. He was
seated at Toby's bar, and Toby was saying, "I proposed to

her this morning, Cliff, and she said yes. I feel like a sixteenyear-old
tdd."
Clifton tried not to let the shock show on his face. He
had to be extremely careful about the way he handled this.
He knew one thing: he could not let that little tramp marry
Toby Temple. The moment the wedding announcement was
made, every cocks man in Hollywood would crawl out of the
woodwork, announcing that he had gotten in there first. It
was a miracle that Toby had not found out about Jill before
now, but it could not be kept from him forever. When he
learned the truth, Toby would kill. He would lash out at
everyone around him, everyone who had let this happen to
him, and Clifton Lawrence would be Ac first to feel the
brunt of Toby's rage. No, Clifton could not let this marriage
take place. He was tempted to point out that Toby was twenty
years older than Jill, but he checked himself. He looked over
at Toby and said cautiously, "It might be a mistake to rush
things. It takes a long time to really get to know a person.
You might change your --"
Toby brushed it aside. "You're gonna be my best man.
You think we should have the wedding here or up in
Vegas?"
Clifton knew that he was wasting his breath. There was

only one way to prevent this disaster from happening. He had
to find a way to stop Jill.

That afternoon, the little agent telephoned Jill and asked
her to come to his office. She arrived an hour late, gave him
a cheek to kiss, sat down on the edge of the couch and said,
"I haven't much time. I'm meeting Toby."
"This won't take long."
Clifton studied her. It was a different Jill. She bore almost
no resemblance to the girl he had first met a few months ago.
There was a confidence about her now, an assurance that she
had not had earlier. Well, he had dealt with girls like her
before.
"Jill, I'm going to lay it on the line," Clifton said. "You're
bad for Toby. I want you to get out of Hollywood." He took
a white envelope out of a drawer. "Here's five thousand
dollars cash. That's enough to take you anywhere you want
to go."
She stared at him a moment, a surprised expression on
her face, then leaned back on the couch and began to laugh.
"I'm not joking," Clifton Lawrence said. "Do you think
Toby would marry you if he found out you've laid everybody
in town?"
She regarded Clifton for a long moment. She wanted to
tell him that he was responsible for everything that had happened
to her. He and all the other people in power who had
refused to give her a chance. They had made her pay with her

body, her pride, her soul. But she knew there was no way she could ever make him understand. He was -trying to bluff her. He would not dare tell Toby about her; it would be Lawrence's word against hers.

Jill rose to her feet and walked out of the office.

One hour later, Clifton received a call from Toby.

Clifton had never heard Toby sound so exdted. "I don't know what you said to Jill, pal, but I have to hand it to you --she can't wait. We're on our way to Las Vegas to get married!"

The Lear jet was thirty-five miles from the Los Angeles

International Airport, flying at 250 knots. David Kenyon made contact with the LAX approach control and gave them his position.

David was exhilarated. He was on his way to Jill.

Cissy had recovered from most of her injuries suffered in the automobile accident, but her face had been badly lacerated. David had sent her to the best plastic surgeon in the world, a doctor in Brazil. She had been gone for six weeks, during which time she had been sending him glowing reports about the doctor.

Twenty-four hours ago, David had received a telephone call from Cissy, saying she was not returning. She had fallen in love.

David could not believe his good fortune.

"That's -- that's wonderful," he managed to slammer. "I hope you and the doctor will be happy."

"Oh, it's not the doctor," Gssy replied. "It's someone who owns a little plantation here. He .looks exactly like you, David. The only difference is that he loves me."

The crackling of the radio interrupted his thoughts. "Lear Three Alpha Papa, this is Los Angeles Approach Control. You're clear for approach to Runway Twenty-five Left. There will be a United seven-oh-seven behind you. When you land, please taxi to the ramp on your right."

"Roger." David began to make his descent, and his heart started to pound. He was on his way to find Jill, to tell her he still loved her, to ask her to marry him.

He was walking through the terminal when he passed the newsstand and saw the headline: "toby temple weds actress". He read the story twice and then turned and went into the airport bar.

He stayed drunk for three days and then flew back to Texas.

28

It was a storybook honeymoon. Toby and Jill flew in a private jet to Las Hadas, where they were the guests of the Patinos at their fairyland resort carved out of the Mexican jungle and beach. The newlyweds were given a private villa

surrounded by cacti, hibiscus and brilliantly colored bouganvillea, where exotic birds serenaded them all night. They spent ten days exploring and yachting and being partied. They ate delicious dinners at the Legazpi prepared by gourmet chefs and swam in the fresh-water pools. Jill shopped at the exquisite boutiques at the Plaza.

From Mexico they flew to Biarritz where they stayed at L'Hotel du Palais, the spectacular palace that Napoleon III built for his Empress Eugenie. The honeymooners gambled at the casinos and went to the bullfights and fished and made love all night.

From the Cote Basque they drove east to Gstaad, thirty-five hundred feet above sea level in the Bernese Oberiand. They took sightseeing flights among the peaks, skimming Mont Blanc and the Matterhom. They skied the dazzling white slopes and rode dog sleds and attended fondue parties and danced. Toby had never been so happy. He had found the woman to make his life complete. He was no longer lonely.

Toby could have continued the honeymoon forever, but Jill was eager to get home. She was not interested in any of these places, nor in any of these people. She felt like a newly

crowned queen who was being kept from her country. Jill Castle was burning to return to Hollywood.

Mrs. Toby Temple had scores to settle.

BOOK THREE

29

There is a smell to failure. It is a stench that clings like a miasma. Just as dogs can detect the odor of fear in a human being, so people can sense when a man is on his way down.

Particularly in Hollywood.

Everyone in the Business knew that Clifton Lawrence was finished, even before he knew it. They could smell it in the air around him.

Clifton had not heard from Toby or Jill in the week since they had returned from their honeymoon. He had sent an expensive gift and had left three telephone messages, which had been ignored. Jill. Somehow she had managed to turn Toby's mind against him. Clifton knew that he had to effect a truce. He and Toby meant too much to each other to let anyone come between them.

Clifton drove out to the house on a morning when he knew Toby would be at the studio. Jill saw him coming up the driveway and opened the door for him. She looked stunningly beautiful, and he said so. She was friendly. They sat

in the garden and had coffee, and she told him about the honeymoon and the places they had been. She said, "I'm sorry Toby hasn't returned your calls. Cliff. You can't believe how frantic it's been around here." She smiled apologetically, and Clifton knew then that he had been wrong about her. She was not his enemy.
"I'd like us to start fresh and be friends," he said.
"Thank you, Cliff. So would I."

Clifton felt an immeasurable sense of relief. "I want to give a dinner party for you and Toby. I'll take over the private room at the Bistro. A week from Saturday. Black tie, a hundred of your most intimate friends. How does that sound?"
"Lovely. Toby will be pleased." ^~~-

Jill waited until the afternoon of the party to telephone and say, "I'm so sorry. Cliff. I'm afraid I'm not going to be able to make it tonight. I'm a little tired. Toby thinks I should stay home and rest."
Clifton managed to hide his feelings. "I'm sorry about that, Jill, but I understand. Toby will be able to come, won't he?"
He heard her sigh over the telephone. "I'm afraid not, dear boy. He won't go anywhere without me. But you have a nice party." And she hung up.
It was too late to call off the party. The bill was three thousand dollars. But it cost Clifton much more than that. He had been stood up by the guest of honor, his one and only client, and everyone there, the studios heads, the stars, the directors -- all the people who mattered in Hollywood -- were aware of it. Clifton tried to cover up by saying that Toby was not feeling well. It was the worst thing he could have done. When he picked up a copy of the Herald Examiner the next afternoon, there was a photograph of Mr. and Mrs. Toby Temple that had been taken at the Dodgers Stadium the night before.

Clifton Lawrence knew now that he was fighting for his life. If Toby dropped him, there .would be no one around to pick him up. None of the big agencies would take him on, because he could bring them no clients; and he could not bear the thought of starting all over again on his own. It was too late for that. He had to find a way to make peace with Jill.
He telephoned Jill and told her he would like to come to the house to talk to her.
"Of course," she said. "I was telling Toby last night that we haven't seen enough of you lately."
"I'll be over in fifteen minutes," Clifton said. He walked

over to the liquor cabinet and poured himself a double Scotch.

He had been doing too much of that lately. It was a bad habit to drink during a working day, but who was he kidding? What work? Every day he received important offers for Toby, but he could not get the great man to sit down and even discuss them with him. In &e past, they had talked over everything. He remembered all &e wonderful times they had had, the trips they had taken, the parties and the laughs and the girls. They had been as close as twins. Toby had needed him, had counted on him. And now... Clifton poured another drink and was pleased to see his hands were not trembling so much.

When Clifton arrived at the Temples' house, Jill was seated on &e terrace, having coffee. She looked up and smiled as she saw him approach. You're a salesman, Clifton told himself. Sell her on you.

"It's nice to see you. Cliff. Sit down."

"Thanks, Jill." He took a seat across from her at a large wrought-iron table and studied her. She was wearing a white summer dress, and &e contrast wi& her black hair and golden, tanned skin was stunning. She looked younger, and — &e only word he could think of somehow — innocent. She was watching him wi& warm, friendly eyes.

"Would you like some breakfast. Cliff?"

"No, &anks. I ate hours ago."

"Toby isn't here."

"I know. I wanted to talk to you alone."

"What can I do for you?"

"Accept my apology," Clifton urged. He had never begged anyone for any&ing in his life, but he was begging now. "We —I got off on &e wrong foot. Maybe it was my fault. It probably was. Toby's been my client and my friend for so long &at I — I wanted to protect him. Can you understand &at?"

Jill nodded, her brown eyes fixed on him, and said, "Of course. Cliff."

He took a deep brea&. "I don't know whe&er he ever told you &e story, but I'm &e one who got Toby started. I knew he was going to be a big star &e first time I saw him." He saw that he had her full attention. "I handled a lot of important clients then, Jill. I let them all go so that I could concentrate on Toby's career."

"Toby's talked to me about how much you've done for him," she said.

"Has he?" He hated the eagerness in his voice.

Jill smiled. "He told me about the day he pretended that Sam Goldwyn telephoned you and how .you went to see Toby anyway. That was nice."

Clifton leaned forward and said, "I don't want anything to happen to the relationship that Toby and I have. I need you in my corner. I'm asking you to forget everything that happened between us. I apologize for being out of line. I thought I was protecting Toby. Well, I was wrong. I think you're going to be great for him."

"I want to be. Very much."

"If Toby drops me, I -- I think it would kill me. I'm not just talking about business. He and I have -- he's been like a son to me. I love him." He despised himself for it, but he heard himself begging again. "Please, Jill, for God's sake..." He stopped, his voice choked.

She looked at him a long moment with those deep brown eyes and then held out her hand. "I don't hold grudges," Jill said. "Can you come to dinner tomorrow night?"

Clifton took a deep breath and then smiled happily and said, "Thanks." He found that his eyes were suddenly misty. "I -- I won't forget this. Ever."

The following morning, when Clifton arrived at his office, there was a registered letter notifying him that his services had been terminated and that he no longer had the authority to act as Toby Temple's agent.

30

Jill Castle Temple was the most exciting thing to hit Hollywood since Cinemascope. In a company town where everyone played the game of admiring the emperor's clothes, Jill used her tongue like a scythe. In a city where flattery was the daily currency of conversation, Jill fearlessly spoke her mind. She had Toby beside her and she brandished his power like a club, attacking all the important studio executives. They had never experienced anything like it before. They did not dare offend Jill, because they did not want to offend Toby. He was Hollywood's most bankable star, and they wanted him, needed him.

Toby was bigger than ever. His television show was still number one in the Nielsen Ratings every week, his movies were enormous money makers, and when Toby played Las Vegas, the casinos doubled their profits. Toby was the hottest property in show business. They wanted him for guest shots, record albums, personal appearances, merchandising, benefits, movies, they wanted they wanted they wanted.

The most important people in town fell all over themselves to please Toby. They quickly learned that the way to please Toby was to please Jill. She began to schedule all of Toby's appointments herself and to organize his life so that there was room in it only for those of whom she approved. She put up an impenetrable barricade around him, and none but the rich and famous and the powerful were allowed to go through it. She was the keeper of the flame. The little Polish girl from Odessa, Texas, entertained and was entertained by

governors, ambassadors, world-renowned artists and the President of the United States. This town had done terrible things to her. But it would never do them again. Not as long

as she had Toby Temple.

The people who were in real trouble were the ones on
JilTs hate list.
She lay in bed with Toby and made sensuous love to him.
When Toby was relaxed and spent, she snuggled in his arms
and said, "Darling, did I ever tell you about the time I was
looking for an agent and I went to this woman -- what was her
name? -- oh, yes! Rose Dunning. She told me she had a part
for me and she sat down on her bed to read with me."
Toby turned to look at her, his eyes narrowing. "What
happened?"
Jill smiled. "Stupid innocent that I was, while I was
reading, I felt her hand go up my thigh." Jill threw back her
head and laughed. "I was frightened out of my wits. I've never
run so fast in my life."
Ten days later. Rose Dunning's agency license was permanently
revoked by &e City Licensing Commission.

The following weekend, Toby and Jill were at their
house in Palm Springs. Toby was lying on a massage table
in a patio, a heavy Turkish towel under him, while Jill
gave him a long, relaxing massage. Toby was on his back,
cotton pads protecting his eyes against the strong rays of the
sun. Jill was working on his feet, using a soft creamy lotion.
"You sure opened my eyes about Cliff," Toby said. "He
was nothing but a parasite, milking me. I hear he's going
around town trying to get himself a partnership deal. No one
wants him. He can't get himself arrested without me."
Jill paused a moment and said, "I feel sorry for Cliff."
"That's the god damned trouble with you, swee&eart.
You think with your heart instead of your head. You've got
to learn to be tougher."
Jill smiled quietly. "I can't help it. I'm the way I am."
She started to work on Toby's legs, moving her hands slowly

up toward his thighs with light, sensuous movements. He
began to have an erection.
"Oh, Jesus," he moaned.
Her hands were moving higher now, moving toward
Toby's groin, and the hardness increased. She slid her hands
between his legs, underneath him, and slipped a creamy finger
inside him. His enormous penis was rock hard.
"Quick, baby," he said. "Get on top of me."

They were at the marina, on the fill, the large motorsailer
Toby had bought for her. Toby's first television show
of the new season was to tape the following day.
"This is the best vacation I've had in my whole life,"
Toby said. "I hate to go back to work."
"It's such a wonderful show," Jill said. "I had fun doing

it. Everyone was so nice." She paused a moment, then added lightly, "Almost everyone."
"What do you mean?" Toby's voice was sharp. "Who wasn't nice to you?"
"No one, darling. I shouldn't have even mentioned it."
But she finally allowed Toby to worm it out of her, and the next day Eddie Berrigan, the casting director, was fired.

In the months that followed, Jill told Toby little fictions about other casting directors on her list, and one by one they disappeared. Everyone who had ever used her was going to pay. It was, she thought, like the rite of mating with the queen bee. They had all had their pleasure, and now they had to be destroyed.

She went after Sam Winters, the man who had told Toby she had no talent. She never said a word against him, on the contrary, she praised him to Toby. But she always praised other studio heads Just a little bit more.... The other studios had properties better suited for Toby... directors who really understood him. Jill would add that she could not help thinking that Sam Winters did not really appreciate Toby's talent.
Before long, Toby began feeling the same way. With Clifton Lawrence gone, Toby had no one to talk to, no one he could

trust, except Jill. When Toby decided to make his movies at another studio, he believed that it was his own idea. But Jill made certain that Sam Winters knew the truth.
Retribution.

There were those around Toby who felt that Jill could not last, that she was simply a temporary intruder, a passing fancy. So they tolerated her or treated her'with a thinly veiled contempt. It was their mistake. One by one, Jill eliminated them. She wanted no one around who had been important in Toby's life or who could influence him against her. She saw to it that Toby changed his lawyer and his public-relations firm and she hired people of her own choosing. She got rid of the three Macs and Toby's entourage of stooges. She replaced all the servants. It was her house now and she was the mistress of it.

A party at the Temples' had become the hottest ticket in town. Everyone who was anybody was there. Actors mingled with socialites and governors and heads of powerful corporations. The press was always there in full force, so that there was a bonus for the lucky guests. Not only did they go to the Temples' and have a wonderful time, but everyone knew that they had been to the Temples' and had a wonderful time.
When the Temples were not hosts, they were guests.
There was an avalanche of invitations. They were invited to

premieres, charity dinners, political affairs, openings of restaurants and hotels.
Toby would have been content to stay at home alone with Jill, but she liked going out. On some evenings, they had three or four parties to attend, and she rushed Toby from one to the other.
"Jesus, you should have been a social director at Grossinger's," Toby laughed.
"I'm doing it for you, darling," Jill replied.

Toby was making a movie for MGM and had a grueling schedule. He came home late one night, exhausted, to find his evening clothes laid out for him. "We're not going out

again, baby? We haven't been home one night the whole fucking yearl"
"It's the Davises' anniversary party. They'd be terribly hurt if we didn't show up."
Toby sat down heavily on &e bed. "I was looking forward to a nice hot bath and a quiet evening. Just the two of us."
But Toby went to the party. And because he always had to be "on", always had to be the center of attention, he drew on his enormous reservoir of energy until everyone was laughing and applauding and telling everyone else what a brilliantly funny man Toby Temple was. Late that night, lying in his bed, Toby was unable to sleep, his body drained, but his mind reliving the triumphs of the evening line by line, laugh by laugh. He was a very happy man. And all because of Jill.
How his mother would have adored her.

In March they received an invitation to the Cannes Film Festival.
"No way," Toby said, when Jill showed him the invitation.
"The only Cannes I'm going to is &e one in my bathroom.
I'm tired, honey. I've been working my butt off."
Jerry Guttman, Toby's public-relations man, had told Jill that there was a good chance that Toby's movie would win the Best Picture Award and that it would help if Toby were there. He relt that it was important for Toby to go.
Lately, Toby had been complaining that he was tired all &e time and was unable to sleep. At night he took sleeping pills, which left him groggy in the morning. Jill counteracted the feeling of tiredness by giving him benzedrine at breakfast so that Toby would have enough energy to get through the day. Now, the cycle of uppers and downers seemed to be taking its toll on him.
"I've already accepted the invitation," Jill told Toby, "but I'll cancel. No problem, darling."
"Let's go down to the Springs for a month and just lie around in the soap."
She looked at him. "What?"
He sat there, very still. "I meant sun. I don't know why itcameoutroap."

She laughed. "Because you're funny." Jill squeezed his hand. "Anyway, Palm Springs sounds wonderful. I love being alone with you."
"I don't know what's wrong with me," Toby sighed. "I just don't have the juice anymore. I guess I'm getting old."
"You'll never get old. You can wear me out."
He grinned. "Yeah? I guess my pecker will live long after I die." He rubbed the back of his head -and said, "I think I'll take a little nap. To tell the truth, I'm not feeling so hot. We don't have a date tonight, do we?"
"Nothing that I can't put off. I'll send the servants away and cook dinner myself tonight. Just us."
"Hey, that'll be great."
He watched her leave, and he thought, Jesus, I'm the luckiest guy who ever lived.

They were lying in bed late that night. Jill had given Toby a warm bath and a relaxing massage, kneading his tired muscles, soothing away his tensions.
"Ah, that feels wonderful," he murmured. "How did I ever get along without you?"
"I can't imagine." She nestled close to him. "Toby, tell me about the Cannes Film Festival. What's it like? I've never been to one."
"It's just a mob of hustlers who come from all over the world to sell their lousy movies to one another. It's the biggest con game in the world."
"You make it sound exciting," Jill said.
"Yeah? Well, I guess it is kind of exciting. The place is filled with characters." He studied her for a moment. "Do you really want to go to that stupid film festival?"
She shook her head quickly. "No. We'll go to Palm Springs."
"Hell, we can go to Palm Springs anytime."
"Really, Toby, it's not important."
He smiled. "Do you know why I'm so crazy about you? Any other woman in the world would have been pestering me to take her to the festival. You're dying to go, but do you say

anything? No. You want to go to the Springs with me. Have you canceled that acceptance?"
"Not yet, but--"
"Don't. We're going to India." A puzzled look came over his face. "Did I say India? I meant -- Cannes."

When their plane landed at Oriy, Toby was handed a cablegram. His father had died in the nursing home. It was too late for Toby to go back for the funeral. He arranged to have

a new wing added to the rest home, named after his parents.

The whole world was at Cannes.
It was Hollywood and London and Rome, all mixed
together in a glorious, many-tongued cacophony of sound and
fury, in Technicolor and Panavision. From all over the globe,
picture makers nocked to the French Riviera, carrying cans of
dreams under their arms, rolls of celluloid made in English
and French and Japanese and Hungarian and Polish, that were
going to make them rich and famous overnight. The croisette
was packed with professionals and amateurs, veterans and tyros,
corners and has-beens, all competing for the prestigious prizes.
Being awarded a prize at the Cannes Film Festival meant
money in the bank; if the winner had no distribution deal, he
could get one, and if he already had one, he could better it.
Every hotel in Cannes was filled, and the overflow had
spilled up and down the coast to Antibes, Beaulieu, Saint'
Tropez and Menton. The residents of the small villages gaped
in awe at the famous faces that filled their streets and restaurants
and bars.
Every room had been reserved for months ahead, but
Toby Temple had no difficulty getting a large suite at the
Carlton. Toby and Jill were feted everywhere they went.
News photographers' cameras clicked incessantly, and their
images were sent around the world. The Golden Couple, the
King and Queen of Hollywood. The reporters interviewed Jill
and asked for her opinions on everything from French wines
to African politics. It was a far cry from Josephine Czinski of
Odessa, Texas.
Toby's picture did not win the award, but two nights

before the festival was to end, the Judges Committee announced
that they were presenting a Special award to Toby
Temple for his contribution to the field of entertainment.
It was a black-tie affair, and the large banquet hall at
the Carlton Hotel overflowed with guests. Jill was seated on
the dais next to Toby. She noticed that he was not eating.
"What's the matter, darling?" she asked.
Toby shook his head. "Probably had too much sun today.
I feel a little woozy."
"Tomorrow I'm going to see that you rest." Jill had
scheduled interviews for Toby with Paris Match and the
London Times in the morning, luncheon with a group of
television reporters, followed by a cocktail party. She decided
she would cancel the least important
At the conclusion of dinner, the mayor of Cannes rose
to his feet and introduced Toby. "Mesdames, messieurs, et
invites distingues, c'est un grand privilege de vow presenter
un homme dont Poeuvre a donne plaisir et bonheur all monde
entier. fai Phonnew de ltd presenter cette medaille specvde,
un signs de notre affection et de notre appreciation." He held

up a gold medal and ribbon and bowed to Toby. "Monsieur Toby Temple!" There was an enthusiastic burst of applause from the audience, as everyone in the great banquet hall rose to his feet in a standing ovation. Toby was seated in his chair, not moving.
"Get up," Jill whispered.
Slowly, Toby rose, pale and unsteady. He stood there a moment, smiled, 'then started toward the microphone. Halfway there, he stumbled and fell to the floor, unconscious.

Toby Temple was flown to Paris in a French air force transport jet and rushed to the American Hospital, where he was put in the intensive-care ward. The finest specialists in France were summoned, while Jill sat in a private room at the hospital, waiting. For thirty-six hours she refused to eat or drink or take any of the phone calls that were flooding into the hospital from all over the world.
She sat alone, staring at the walls, neither seeing nor hearing the stir of activity around her. Her mind was focused

on only one thing: Toby had to get well. Toby was her sun, and if the sun went out, the shadow would die. She could not allow that to happen.
It was five o'clock in the morning when Doctor Duclos, the chief of staff, entered the private room Jiil had taken so she could be near Toby.
"Mrs. Temple — I am afraid there is no point in trying to soften the blow. Your husband has suffered a massive stroke. In all probability, he will never be able to walk or speak again."

3i

When they finally allowed Jill into Toby's hospital room in Paris, she was shocked by his appearance. Overnight, Toby had become old and desiccated, as if all his vital fluids had drained out of him. He had lost partial use of both arms, and legs, and though he was able to make grunting animal noises, he could not speak*
It was six weeks before the doctors would permit Toby to be moved. When Toby and Jill arrived back in California, they were mobbed at the airport by the press and television media and hundreds of well-wishers. Toby Temple's illness had caused a major sensation. There were constant phone calls from friends inquiring about Toby's health and progress. Television crews tried to get into the house to take pictures Of him. There were messages from the President and senators, and thousands of letters and postcards from (Fans who loved Toby Temple and were praying for him.
But the invitations had stopped. No one was calling to find out how Jill felt, or whether she would like to attend a quiet dinner or take a drive or see a movie. Nobody in Hollywood

cared a damn about Jill.
She had brought in Toby's personal physician, Dr. Eli Kaplan, and he had summoned two top neurologists, one from UCLA Medical Centre and the other from Johns Hopkins.
Their diagnosis was exactly the same as that of Dr. Duclos, in Paris.
"It's important to understand," Dr. Kaplan told Jill, "that Toby's mind is not impaired in any way. He can hear

and understand everything you say, but his speech and motor functions are affected. He can't respond."
"Is -- is he always going to be like this?"
Dr. Kaplan hesitated. "It's impossible to be absolutely certain, of course, but in our opinion, his nervous system has been too badly damaged for therapy to have any appreciable effect."
"But you don't know for sure."
"No..."
But Jill knew.

In addition to the three nurses who tended Toby round the clock, Jill arranged for a physiotherapist to come to the house every morning to work with Toby. The therapist carried Toby into the pool and held him in his arms, gently stretching the muscles and tendons, while Toby feebly tried to kick his legs and move his arms about in the warm water. There was no progress. On the fourth week, a speech therapist was brought in. She spent one hour every afternoon trying to help Toby learn to speak again, to form the sounds of words.
After two months, Jill could see no change. None at all.
She sent for Dr. Kaplan.
"You've got to do something to help him," she demanded.
"You can't leave him like this."
He looked at her helplessly. "I'm sorry, Jill. I tried to tell you...."

Jill sat in the library, alone, long after Dr. Kaplan had gone. She could feel one of the bad headaches beginning, but there was no time to think of herself now. She went upstairs. Toby was propped up in bed, staring at nothingness. As Jill walked up to him, Toby's deep blue eyes lit up. They followed Jill, bright and alive, as she approached his bed and looked down at him. His lips moved and some unintelligible sound came out. Tears of frustration began to fill his eyes. Jill remembered Dr. Kaplan's words. It's important to understand going to walk and you're going to talk." The tears were running down the sides of his cheeks now. "You're going to do it," Jill said. "You're going to do it for me."

The following morning, Jill fired the nurses, the physiotherapist and the speech therapist. As soon as he heard the

news. Dr. Eli Kaplan hurried over to see Jill.
"I agree with you about the physiotherapist, Jill--but the nurses I Toby has to have someone'with him twenty-four hours a --"
"I'll be with him."
He shook his head. "You have no. idea what you're letng yourself in for. One person can't --"
"I'll call you if I need you."
She.sent him away.

The ordeal began.
Jill was going to attempt to do what the doctors had assured her could not be done. The first time she picked Toby up and put him into his wheelchair, it frightened her to feel how weightless he was. She took him downstairs in the elevator that had been installed and began to work with him in the swimming pool, as she had seen the physiotherapist do. But what happened now was different. Where the therapist had been gentle and coaxing, Jill was stem and unrelenting. When Toby tried to speak, signifying that he was tired and could not bear any more, Jill said, "You're not through. One more time. For me, Toby."
And she would force him to do it one more time.
And yet again, until he sat mutely crying with exhaustion.
In the afternoon, Jill set to work to teach Toby to speak again. "Ooh... oooooooh."
"Ahaaahh... aaaaaaaaaagh ..."
"No! Ooooooooh. Round your lips, Toby. Make them obey you. Oooooooh."
"Aaaaaaaaaagh..."
"No, goddamn you! You're going to speak! Now, say it --Ooooooooooh!"

And he would try again.
Jill would feed him each night, and then lie in his bed, holding him in her aims. She drew his useless hands slowly up and down her body, across her breasts and down the soft cleft between her legs. "Feel that, Toby," she whispered. "That's all yours, darling. It belongs to you. I want you. I want you to get well so we can make love again. I want you to fuck me, Toby."
He looked at her with those alive, bright eyes and made incoherent, whimpering sounds.
"Soon, Toby, soon."

Jill was tireless. She discharged the servants because she did not want anyone around. After that, she did all the cooking herself. She ordered her groceries by phone and never left the house. In the beginning, Jill had been kept busy answering the telephones, but the calls had soon dwindled to a trickle, then ceased. Newscasters had stopped giving bulletins on Toby

Temple's condition. The world knew that he was dying. It was just a question of time.
But Jill was not going to let Toby die. If he died, she would die with him.

The days blended into one long, endless round of drudgery. Jill was up at six o'clock in the morning. First, she would clean Toby. He was totally incontinent. Even though he wore a catheter and a diaper, he would befoul himself during the night and the bedclothes would sometimes have to be changed, as well as Toby's pajamas. The stench in the bedroom was almost unbearable. Jill filled a basin with warm water, took a sponge and soft cloth and cleaned the feces and urine from Toby's body. When he was clean, she dried him off and powdered him, then shaved him and combed his hair.
"There. You look beautiful, Toby. Your fans should see you now. But they'll see you soon. They'll fight to get in to see you. The President will be there -- everybody will be there to see Toby Temple."
Then Jill prepared Toby's breakfast. She made oatmeal or cream of wheat or scrambled eggs, food she could spoon into his mouth. She fed him as though he were a baby, talking to him all the time, promising that he was going to get well.
"You're Toby Temple," she intoned. "Everybody loves you, everybody wants you back. Your fans out there are waiting for you, Toby. You've got to get well for them."
And another long, punishing day would begin.

She wheeled his useless, crippled body down to the pool for his exerdses. After that, she massaged him and worked on his speech therapy. Then it was time for her to prepare his lunch, and after lunch it would begin all over again. Through it all, Jill kept telling Toby how wonderful he was, how much he was loved. He was Toby Temple, and the world was waiting, for him to come back to it. At night she would take out one of his scrapbooks and hold it up so he could see it.
"There we are with the Queen. Do you remember, how they all cheered you that night? That's the way it's going to be again. You're going to be bigger than ever, Toby, bigger than ever."
She tucked him-in at night and crawled into the cot she had put next to his bed, drained. In the middle of the night, she would be awakened by the noisome stench of Toby's bowel movement in bed. She would drag herself from her cot and change Toby's diaper and clean him. By then it would be time to start fixing his breakfast and begin another day.
And another. In an endless march of days.
Each day Jill pushed Toby a little harder, a little further. Her nerves were so frayed that, if she felt Toby was not trying, she would slap him across the face. "We're going to beat them," she said fiercely. "You're going to get well."

Jill's body was exhausted from the punishing routine

she was putting herself through, but when she lay down at
night, sleep eluded her. There were too many visions dancing
through her head, like scenes from old movies. She and Toby
mobbed by reporters at the Cannes Festival... The President
at their Palm Springs home, telling Jill how beautiful she
was... Fans crowding around Toby and her at a premiere
... The Golden Couple... Toby stepping up to receive

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his medal and falling... falling ... Finally, she would drift
off to sleep.
Sometimes, Jill would awaken with a sudden, fierce headache
that would not go away. She would lie there in the loneliness
of the dark,, fighting the pain, until the sun would come
up, and it was time to drag herself to her feet.
And it would begin all over again. It was as though she
and Toby were the lone survivors of some long-forgotten
holocaust. Her world had shrunk to the dimensions of this
house, these rooms, this man. She drove herself relentlessly
from dawn until past midnight.
And she drove Toby, her Toby imprisoned in hell, in a
world where there was only Jill, whom he must blindly
obey.
The weeks, dreary and painful, dragged by and turned
into months. Now, Toby would begin to cry when he saw Jill
coming toward him, for he knew he was going to be punished.
' Each day Jill became more merciless. She forced Toby's, flopping,
useless limbs to move, until he was in unbearable agony.
He made horrible gurgling pleas for her to stop, but Jill would
say, "Not yet. Not until you're a man again, not until we show
them all." She would go on kneading his exhausted muscles.
He was a helpless, full-grown baby, a vegetable, a nothing.
But when Jill looked at him, she saw him as he was going to be,
and she declared, "You're going to walk!"
She would lift him to his feet and hold him up while she
forced one leg after the other, so that he was moving in a
grotesque parody of motion, like a drunken, disjointed
marionette.
Her headaches had become more frequent. Bright lights
or a loud noise or sudden movement would set them off. /
must see a doctor, she thought. Later, when Toby is well
again. Now there was no time or room for herself.
Only Toby.
It was as though Jill were possessed. Her clothes hung
loosely on her, but she had no idea of how much weight she
had lost or how she looked. Her face was thin and drawn, her
eyes hollow. Her once beautiful shiny black hair was lusterless
and stringy. She did not know, nor would she have cared.

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One day Jffl found a telegram under the door asking her

to phone Dr. Kaplan. No time. The routine must be kept.
The days and nights became a Kafkaesque blur of bathing
Toby and exercising him and changing him and shaving him
and feeding him.
And then starting all over again.
She got a walker for Toby and fastened his fingers around
it and moved his legs, holding him up, trying to show him
the motions, walking him back and forth across the room until
she was asleep on her feet, not knowing any longer where or
who she was, or what she was doing.
Then, one day, Jill knew that it had all come to an end.

She had been up with Toby half the night and had finally
gone into her own bedroom, where she had fallen into a dazed
slumber just before dawn. When Jffl awakened, the sun was
high in the sky. She had slept long past noon. Toby had not
been fed or bathed or changed. He was lying in his bed, helpless,
waiting for her, probably panicky. Jffl started to rise and
found that she could not move. She was filled with such a
bottomless, bone-deep weariness that her exhausted body would
no longer obey her. She lay there, helpless, knowing that she
had lost, that it had all been wasted, all the days and nights of
hell, the months of agony, none of it had meant anything. Her
body had betrayed her, as Toby's had betrayed him. Jffl had
no strength left to give him anymore, and it made her want to
weep. It was finished.
She heard a sound at her bedroom door and she raised
her eyes. Toby was standing in the doorway, by himself, his
trembling arms clutching his walker, his mouth making unintelligible
slobbering noises, working to say something.
"Jiiuiugb... Jiiiiiigh..."
He was trying to say "Jffl". She began to sob uncontrollably,
and she could not stop.

From that day on, Toby's progress was spectacular. For
the first time, he knew he was going to get well. He no longer
objected when Jffl pushed him beyond the limits of his endurance.
He welcomed it He wanted to get well for her. Jffl

bad become his goddess; if he had loved her before, he worshiped
her now.
And something had happened to Jill. Before, it had been
her own life she was fighting for; Toby was merely the instrument
she was forced to use. But somehow, that had changed.
It was as though Toby had become a part of her. They were
one body and one mind and one soul, obsessed with the same
purpose. They had gone through a purging crudble. His life
bad been in her hands, and she had nurtured it and strengthned
it, and saved it, and out of that had grown a kind of love.
Toby belonged to her, just as she belonged to him.

Jill changed Toby's diet, so that he began to regain the

weight he had lost. He spent time in the sun every day and
took long walks around the grounds, using the walker, then
a cane, building up his strength. When the day came that
Toby could walk by himself, the two of them celebrated by
having a candlelight dinner in the dining room.
Finally, Jill felt that Toby was ready to be seen. She
telephoned Dr. Kaplan, and his nurse put him on the phone
immediately.
"Jill! I've been terribly worried. I've tried to telephone
you and there was never any answer. I sent a telegram, and
when I didn't hear, I assumed you had taken Toby away
somewhere. Is he--has he-- ?"
"Come and see for yourself, Eli."

Dr. Kaplan could not conceal his astonishment. "It's
unbelievable," he told Jill. "It's -- it's like a miracle."
"It is a miracle," Jill said. Only in this life you made your
own miracles, because God was busy elsewhere.
"People still call me to ask about Toby," Dr. Kaplan
was saying. "Apparently they've been unable to get through
to you. Sam Winters calls at least once a week. Clifton
; Lawrence has been calling."
| Jill dismissed Clifton Lawrence. But Sam Winters! That
I was good. Jill had to find a way to let the world know that
I Toby Temple was still a superstar, that they were still the
; Golden Couple.
Jill telephoned Sam Winters the next morning and asked
him if he would like to come and visit Toby. Sam arrived
at the house an hour later. Jill opened the front door to let
him in, and Sam tried to conceal his shock at her appearance.
Jill looked ten years older than when he had last seen her. Her
eyes were hollow brown pools and her face was etched with
deep lines. She had lost so much weight that she looked
almost skeletal.
"Thank you for coming, Sam. Toby will be pleased to
see you."
Sam had been prepared to see Toby in bed, a shadow of
the man he had once been, but he was in for a stunning surprise.
Toby was lying on a pad alongside the pool and, as Sam
approached, Toby rose to his feet, a little slowly, but steadily,
and held out a firm hand. He appeared tanned and healthy,
better than he had looked before his stroke. It was as though
through some arcane alchemy, Jill's health and vitality had
Sowed into Toby's body, and the sick tides that had ravaged
Toby had ebbed into Jill.
"Hey! It's great to see you, Sam."
Toby's speech was a little slower and more precise than
before, but it was clear and strong. There was no sign of the
paralysis Sam had heard about. There was still the same boyish
face with the bright blue eyes. Sam gave Toby a hug and said,
"Jesus, you really had us scared."
Toby grinned and said, "You don't have to call me 'Jesus'
when we're alone."

Sam looked at Toby more closely and marveled. "I
honestly can't get over it. Damn it, you look younger. The
whole town was making funeral arrangements."
"Over my dead body," Toby smiled.
Sam said, "It's fantastic what the doctors today can —"
"No doctors." Toby turned to look at Jill and naked
adoration shone from his eyes. "You want to know who did
it? Jill. just Jill. With her two bare hands. She threw everybody
out and made me get on my feet again."
Sam glanced at Jill, puzzled. She had not seemed to him
the kind of girl capable of such a selfless act. Perhaps he had
misjudged her. "What are your plans?" he asked Toby. "I
suppose you'll want to rest and --"
"He's going back to work," Jill said. "Toby's too talented
to be sitting around doing nothing."
"I'm raring to go," Toby agreed.
"Perhaps Sam has a project for you," Jill suggested.
They were both watching him. Sam did not want to
discourage Toby, but neither did he want to hold out any
false hopes. It was not possible to make a picture with a star
unless you got insurance on him, and no company was going
to insure Toby Temple.
"There's nothing in the shop at the moment," Sam said
carefully. "But I'll certainly keep an eye open."
"You're afraid to use him, aren't you?" It was as though
she was reading his mind.
"Certainly not." But they both knew he was lying.
No one in Hollywood would take a chance on using Toby
Temple again.

Toby and Jill were watching a young comedian on
television.
"He's rotten," Toby snorted. "Damn it, I wish I could
get back on the air. Maybe I oughta get an agent. Somebody
who could check around town and see what's doing."
"No!" Jill's tone was firm. "We're not going to let anyone
peddle you. You're not some bum looking for a job. You're
Toby Temple. We're going to make them come to you."
Toby smiled wryly and said, "They're not beating down
the doors, baby."
"They will be," Jill promised. "They don't know what
shape you're in. You're better now than you ever were. We
just have to show them." ...
"Maybe I should pose in the nude for one of those
magazines."
Jill was not listening. "I have an idea," she said slowly.
"A one-man show."
"Huh?"
"A one-man show." There was a growing excitement in
her voice. "I'm going to book you into the Hunrington Hartford Theatre.
Everybody in Hollywood will come. After that,
they'll start beating down the doors!"

And everybody in Hollywood did come: producers,
directors, stars, critics -- all the people in show business who mattered. The theater on Vine Street had long since been sold out, and hundreds of people had been turned away. There was a cheering mob outside the lobby when Toby and Jill arrived in a chauffeur-driven limousine. He was their Toby Temple. He had come back to them from the dead, and they adored him more than ever.
The audience inside the theater was there partly out of respect for a man who had been famous and great, but mostly out of curiosity. They were there to pay final tribute to a dying hero, a burnt-out star.
Jill had planned the show herself. She had gone to O'Hanlon and Rainger, and they had written some brilliant material, beginning with a monologue kidding the town for burying Toby while he was still alive. Jill had approached a song-writing team that had won three Academy Awards. They had never written special material for anyone, but when Jill said, "Toby insists you're the only writers in the world who.'.."
Dick Landry, the director, flew in from London to stage the show.
Jill had assembled the finest talent she could find to back up Toby, but in the end everything would depend on the star himself. It was a one-man show, and he would be alone on that stage.
The moment finally arrived. The house lights dimmed, and the theater was filled with that expectant hush that precedes the ringing up of the curtain, the silent prayer that on this night magic would happen.
It happened.
As Toby Temple strolled out onto the stage, his gait strong and steady, that familiar impish smile lighting up that boyish face, there was a momentary silence and then a wild explosion of applause and yelling, a standing ovation that rocked the theater for a full five minutes. .
Toby stood there, waiting for the pandemonium to subside, and when the theater was finally still, he said, "You call that a reception?" And they roared.
He was brilliant. He told stories and sang and danced, and he attacked everybody, and it was as though he had never been gone. The audience could not get enough of him. He was still a superstar, but now he was something more; he had become a living legend.
The Variety review the next day said, "They came to bury Toby Temple, but they stayed to praise him and cheer him. And how he deserved it! There is no one in show business who has the old master's magic. It was an evening of ovations, and no one who was fortunate enough to be there is likely ever to forget that memorable..."
The Hollywood Reporter review said, "The audience was there to see a great star come back, but Toby Temple proved he had never been away."

All the other reviews were in the same panegyric vein.
From that moment on, Toby's phones rang constantly. Letters and telegrams poured in with invitations and offers.
They were beating the doors down.

Toby repeated his one-man show in Chicago and in Washington and New York; everywhere he went, he was a sensation. There was more interest in him now than there had ever been. In a wave of affectionate nostalgia, Toby's old movies were shown at art theaters and at universities. Television stations had a Toby Temple Week and ran his old variety shows.
There were Toby Temple dolls and Toby Temple games and Toby Temple puzzles and jokebooks and T-shirts. There were endorsements for coffee and cigarettes and toothpaste.
Toby did a cameo in a musical picture at Universal and was signed to do guest appearances on all the big variety shows. The networks had writers at work, competing to develop a new Toby Temple Hour.
The sun was out once more, and it was shining on Jill.
There were parties again, and receptions and this ambassador and that senator and private screenings and... Everybody wanted them for everything. They were given a dinner at the White House, an honor usually reserved for heads of state. They were applauded wherever they appeared.
But now it was Jill they were applauding, as well as Toby.
The magnificent story of what she had done, her feat of singlehandedly nursing Toby bade to health against all odds, had stirred the imagination of the world. It was hailed by the press as the love story of the century. Time Magazine put them both on the cover, with a glowing tribute to Jill in the accompanying story.

A five-million-dollar deal was made for Toby to star in a new weekly television variety show, starting in September, only twelve weeks away.
"We'll go to Palm Springs so that you can rest until then," Jill said.
Toby shook his head. "You've been shut in long enough.
We're going to live a little." He put his arms around her and added, "I'm not very good with words, baby, unless they're jokes. I don't know how to tell you what I feel about you.
I -- I just want you to know that I didn't start living until the day I met you."
And he abruptly turned away, so that Jill could not see the tears in his eyes.
Toby arranged to tour his one-man show in London, Paris and -- the greatest coup of all -- Moscow. Everyone was fighting to sign him. He was as big a cult figure in Europe as he was in America.

They were out on the fill, on a sunny, sparkling day, headed for Catalina. There were a dozen guests aboard the

boat, among them Sam Winters and O'Hanlon and Rainger,
who had been selected as the head writers on Toby's new
television show. They were all in the salon, playing games
and talking. Jill looked around and noticed that Toby was
missing. She went out on deck.
Toby was standing at the railing, staring at the sea. Jill
walked up to him and said, "Are you feeling all right?"
"Just watching the water, baby."

"It's beautiful, isn't it?"
"If you're a shark." He shuddered. "That's not the way
I want to die. I've always been terrified of drowning."
She put her hand in his. "What's bothering you?"
He looked at her. "I guess I don't want to die. I'm afraid
of what's out there. Here, I'm a big man. Everybody knows
Toby Temple. But out there...? You know my idea of Hell?
A place where there's no audience."

The Friars Club gave a Roast with Toby Temple as Ae
guest of honor. A dozen top comics were on the dais, along
with Toby and Jill, Sam Winters and the head of the network
that Toby had signed with. Jill was asked to stand up and
take a bow. It became a standing ovation.
They're cheering me, Jill thought. Not Toby. Me!
The master of ceremonies was the host of a famous nighttime
television talk show. "I can't tell you how happy I am
to see Toby here," he said. "Because if we weren't honoring
him here tonight, we'd be holding this banquet at Forest
Lawn."
Laughter.
"And believe me, the food's terrible there. Have you ever
eaten at Forest Lawn? They serve leftovers from the Last
Supper."
LaughterHe
turned to Toby. "We really are proud of you, Toby.
I mean that. I understand you've been asked to donate a part
of your body to science. They're going to put it in a jar at
Ae Harvard Medical School. The only problem so far is that
they haven't been able to find a jar big enough to hold it."
Roars.
When Toby got up for his rebuttal, he topped them all.
Everyone agreed that it was the best Roast Ae Friars
had ever held.

Clifton Lawrence was in Ae audience Aat night.
He was seated at a table in Ae back of Ae room near
the kitchen wiA Ae oAer unimportant people. He had been
forced to impose on old friendships to get even this table.

Ever since Toby Temple had fired him, Clifton Lawrence had
worn the label of a loser. He had tried to make a partnership
deal with a large agency. With no clients, however, he had
nothing to offer. Then Clifton had tried the smaller agencies,
but they were not interested in a middle-aged has-been; they
wanted aggressive young men. In the end, Clifton had settled
for a salaried job with a small new agency. His weekly salary
was less than what he had once spent 'is one evening at
Romanoff's.
He remembered his first day at the new agency. It was
owned by three aggressive young men -- no, kids -- all of them
in their late twenties. Their clients were rock stars. Two of
the agents were bearded, and they all wore jeans and sport
shirts and tennis shoes without socks. They made Clifton feel
a thousand years old. They spoke in a language he did not
understand. They called him "Dad" and "Pop" and he thought
of the respect he had once commanded in this town, and he
wanted to weep.
The once dapper, cheerful agent had become seedylooking
and bitter. Toby Temple had been his whole life, and
Clifton talked about those days compulsively. It was all he
thought about. That and Jill. Clifton blamed her for everything
that had- happened to him. Toby could not help himself;
he had been influenced by that bitch. But, oh, how Clifton
hated Jill.
He was sitting in the back of the room watching the
crowd applaud Jill Temple when one of the men at the table
said, "Toby's sure a lucky bastard. I wish I had a piece of that.
She's great in bed."
"Yeah?" someone asked, cynically. "How would you
know?"
"She's in that porno flick at the Pussycat Theatre. Hell,
I thought she was going to suck the guy's liver out of him."
Clifton's mouth was suddenly so dry that he could hardly
get out the words. "Are you -- are you sure it was JiJI Castle?"
be asked.
The straoger turned to him. "Sure, I'm sure. She used
another name -- Josephine something. A crazy Polack name."

He stared at Clifton and said, "Hey! Didn't you used to be
Clifton Lawrence?"

There is an area of Santa Monica Boulevard, bordering
between Fairfax and La Cienega, that is County territory.
Part of an island surrounded by the City of Los Angeles, it
operates under County ordinances, which are more lenient
than those of the City. In one six-block area, there are four
movie houses that run only hard-core pornography, half a
dozen bookshops where customers can stand in private booths and watch movies
through individual viewers and a dozen
massage parlors staffed with nubile young girls who are experts,

at giving everything except massages. The Pussycat Theatre
sits in the midst of it all.
There were perhaps two dozen people in the darkened
theater, all of them men except for two women who sat holding
hands. Clifton looked around at the audience and wondered
what drove these people to darkened caverns in the middle of
a sunny day, to spend hours watching images of other people
fornicating on film.
The main feature came on, and Clifton forgot everything
except what was up on the screen. He leaned forward
in his seat, concentrating on the face of each actress. The
plot was about a young college professor who smuggled his
female students into his bedroom for night classes. All of them
were young, surprisingly attractive and incredibly endowed.
They went through a variety of sexual exercises, oral, vaginal
and anal, until the professor was as satisfied as his pupils.
But none of the girls was Jill. She has to be there, Clifton
thought. This was the only chance he would ever have to
avenge himself for what she had done to him. He would
arrange for Toby to see the film. It would hurt Toby, but he
would get over it. Jill would be destroyed. When Toby learned
what kind of whore he had married, he would throw her out on
her ass. Jill had to be in this film.
And suddenly, there she was--on the wide screen, in
wonderful, glorious, living color. She had changed a great
deal. She was thinner now, more beautiful and more sophisticated.
But it was Jill. Clifton sat there, drinking in the scene,

reveling in it, rejoicing and feasting his senses, filled with an
electrifying sense of triumph and vengeance.
Clifton remained in his seat undl the credits came on.
There it was, Josephine Czinski. He got to his feet and made
his way back to the projection booth. A man in shirt sleeves was inside the
small room, reading a racing form. He glanced
up as Clifton entered and said, "No one's allowed in here,
buddy."
"I want to buy a print of that picture."
The man shook his head. "Not for sale." He went back
to his handicapping.
"I'll give you a hundred bucks to run off a dupe. No one
will ever know."
The man did not even look up.
"Two hundred bucks," Clifton said.
The projectionist turned a page.
"Three hundred."
He looked up and studied Clifton. "Cash?"
"Cash."

At ten o'clock the following morning, Clifton arrived at
Toby Temple's house with a can of film under his arm. No,
not film, he'thought happily. Dynamite. Enough to blou fill

Castle to hell.
The door was opened by an English butler Clifton had not seen before.
"Tell Mr. Temple that Clifton Lawrence is here to see him."
"I'm sorry, sir. Mr. Temple is not here."
"I'll wait," Clifton said firmly.
The butler replied, "I'm afraid that won't be possible. Mr. and Mrs. Temple left for Europe this morning."

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Europe was a succession of triumphs.
The night of Toby's opening at the Palladium in London, Oxford Circus was jammed with crowds frantically trying to get a glimpse of Toby and Jffl. The entire area around Argyll Street had been cordoned off by the metropolitan police. When the mob got out of hand, mounted police were hastily summoned to assist. Precisely at the stroke of eight o'clock, the Royal Family arrived and the show began.
Toby exceeded everyone's wildest expectations. His face beaming with innocence, he brilliantly attacked the British government and its old-school-tie smugness. He explained how it had managed to become less powerful than Uganda and how it could not have happened to a more deserving country. They all roared with laughter, because they knew that Toby Temple was only joking. He did not mean a word of it. Toby loved them.
As they loved him.

The reception in Paris was even more tumultuous. Jill and Toby were guests at the President's Palace and were driven around the city in a state limousine. They could be seen on the front pages of the newspapers every day, and when they appeared at the theater, extra police had to be called out to control the crowds. At the end of Toby's performance, he and Jill were being escorted toward their waiting limousine when suddenly the mob broke through the police guard and hundreds of Frenchmen descended on them, screaming, "Toby,

Toby... on veut Toby!" The surging crowd held out pens and autograph books, pressing forward to touch the great Toby Temple and his wonderful Jill. The police were unable to hold them back; the crowd swept them aside, tearing at Toby's clothes, fighting to obtain a souvenir. Toby and Jill were almost crushed by the press of bodies, but Jill felt no fear. This riot was a tribute to her. She had done this for these people; she had brought Toby back to them.

Their last stop was Moscow.
Moscow in June is one of the loveliest ddes in the world.

Graceful white berezka and Upa trees with yellow flowerbeds line the wide boulevards crowded with natives and visitors strolling in the sunshine. It is the season for tourists. Except for official visitors, all tourists to Russia are handled through Intourist, the government-controlled agency which arranges transportation, hotels and guided sightseeing tours. But Toby and Jill were met at the Sheremetyevo International Airport by a large Zil limousine and driven to the Metropole Hotel, usually reserved for VIPs from satellite countries. The suite had been stocked with Stoliohnaya vodka and black caviar. General Yuri Romanovitch, a high party official, came to the hotel to bid them welcome. "We do not run many American pictures in Russia, Mr. Temple, but we have played your movies here often. The Russian people feel that genius transcends all boundaries."

Toby had been booked to appear at the Bolshoi Theatre for three performances. Opening night, Jill shared in the ovation. Because of the language barrier, Toby did most of his act in pantomime, and the audience adored him. He gave a diatribe in his pseudo-Russian, and their laughter and applause echoed through the enormous theater like a benediction of love.
During the next two days. General Romanovitch escorted Toby and Jill on a private sightseeing tour. They went to Gorky Park and rode on the giant ferris wheel, and saw the historic Saint Basil's Cathedral. They were taken to the Moscow State Circus and given a banquet at Aragvi, where they were

served the golden roe caviar, the rarest of the eight caviars, zakushki, which literally means small bites, and pashteet, the delicate pate baked ina crust. For dessert, they ate yoblochnaya, the incredibly delicious apple charlotte pastry with apricot sauce.
And more sightseeing. They went to the Pushkin Art Museum and Lenin's Mausoleum and the Detsky Mir, Moscow's enchanting children's shop.
They were taken to places of whose existence most Russians were unaware. Granovsko Street, crowded with chauffeur-driven Chaikas and Volgas. Inside, behind a simple door marked "Office of Special Passes", they were ushered into a store crammed with imported luxury foodstuffs from all over the world. This was where the "Nachalstov", the Russian elite, were privileged to shop.
They went to a luxurious dacha, where foreign films were run in the private screening room for &e privileged few. It was a fascinating insight into the People's State.

On the afternoon of the day Toby was to give his final performance, the Temples were getting ready to go out shopping. Toby said, "Why doa't you go alone, baby? I think I'll

sack out for a while."
She studied him for a moment. "Are you feeling all
right?"
"Great. I'm just a little tired. You go buy out Moscow."
Jill hesitated. Toby looked pale. When this tour was over,
she would see to it that Toby had a long rest before he began
his new television show. "All right," she agreed. "Take a nap."

Jill was walking through the lobby toward the exit when
she heard a man's voice call, "Josephine", and even as she
turned, she knew who it was, and in a split second the magic
happened again.
David Kenyon was moving toward her, smiling and saying,
"I'm so glad to see you", and she felt as though her heart
would stop. He's the only man who has ever been able to do
this to me. Jill thought.

"Will you have a drink with me?" David asked.
"Yes," she said.

The hotel bar was large and crowded, but they found a
comparatively quiet table in a corner where they could talk.
"What are you doing in Moscow?" Jill asked.
"Our government asked me to come over. We're trying to
work out an oil deal." ' A
bored waiter strolled over to the table and took their
order for drinks.
"How's Cissy?"
David looked at her a moment, then said, "We got a
divorce a few years ago." He deliberately changed the subject.
"I've followed everything that's been happening to you. I've
been a fan of Toby Temple's since I was a kid." Somehow,
it made Toby sound very old. "I'm glad he's well again. When
I read about his stroke, I was concerned about you." There was
a look in his eyes that Jill remembered from long ago, a wanting,
a needing.
"I thought Toby was great in Hollywood and London,"
David was saying.
"Were you there?" Jill asked, in surprise.
"Yes." Then he added quickly, "I had some business Acre."
"Why didn't you come backstage?"
He hesitated. "I didn't want to intrude on you. I didn't
know if you would want to see me."
Their drinks arrived in heavy, squat glasses.
"To you and Toby," David said. And there was something
in the way he said it, an undercurrent of sadness, a
hunger,..
"Do you always stay at the Metropole?" Jill asked.
"No. As a matter of fact, I had a hell of a time getting --"
He saw the trap too late. He smiled wryly. "I knew you'd be
there. I was supposed to have left Moscow five days ago. I've
been waiting, hoping to run into you."

"Why, David?"
It was a long time before he replied. When he spoke,

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he said, "It's all too late now, but I want to tell you anyway,
because I think you have a right to know."
And he told her about his marriage to Qssy, how she
had tricked him, about her attempted suicide, and about the
night when he had asked Jill to meet him at the lake. It all
came out in an outpouring of emotion that left Jill shaken.
"I've always been in love with you."
She sat listening, a feeling of happiness flowing through
her body like a warm wine. It was like a lovely dream come
true, it was everything she had wanted, wished for. Jill studied
the man sitting across from her, and she remembered his
strong hands on her, and his hard demanding body, and she
felt a stirring within herself. But Toby had become a part of
her, he was her own flesh; and David...
A voice at her elbow said, "Mrs. Temple! We have been
looking everywhere for you!" It was General Romanovitch.
Jill looked at David. "Call me in the morning."

Toby's last performance in the Bolshoi Theatre was more
exciting than anything that had been seen there before. The
spectators threw flowers and cheered and stamped their feet
and refused to leave. It was a fitting climax to Toby's other
triumphs. A large party was scheduled for after the show, but
Toby said to Jill, "I'm beat, goddess. Why don't you go? I'll
return to the hotel and get some shut-eye."

Jill went to the party alone, but it was as though David
were at her side every moment. She carried on conversations
with her hosts and danced and acknowledged the tributes they
were paying to her, but all the time her mind was reliving her
meeting with David. I warned the wrong girl. Cissy and I
are divorced. I've never Stopped loving you.

At two o'clock in the morning, Jill's escort dropped her
at her hotel suite. She went inside and found Toby lying on the
floor in the middle of the room, unconscious, his right hand
stretched out toward the telephone.

matic Polyclinic at 3 Sverchkov Prospekt. Three top spedahsts
were summoned in the middle of the night to examine him.
Everyone was sympathetic toward Jill. The chief of the hospital
escorted her to a private office, where she waited for news.
It's like a rerun, Jill thought. All this had happened before. It
had a vague, unreal quality.
Hours later, the door to the office opened and a short, fat
Russian waddled in. He was dressed in an ill-fitting suit and
looked like an unsuccessful plumber. "I am Dr. Durov," he
said. "I am in charge of your husband's case."

"I want to know how he is."
"Sit down, Mrs. Temple, please."
Jill had not even been aware that she had stood up.
"Tellmel"
"Your husband has suffered a stroke -- technically called
a cerebral venous thrombosis."
"How'badisit?"
"It is the most -- what do you say? -- hard-hitting,
dangerous. If your husband lives -- and it is too soon to tell --
he will never walk or speak again. His mind is dear but he is
completely paralyzed."

Before Jill left Moscow, David telephoned her.
"I can't tell you how sorry I am," he said. "I'll be standing
by. Anytime you need me, I'll be there. Remember that."
It was the only thing that helped Jill keep her sanity in
the nightmare that was about to begin.

The journey home was a hellish deja vu. The hospital
litter in the plane, the ambulance from the airport to the house,
the sickroom.
Except that this rime it was not die same. Jill had known
it the moment they had allowed her to see Toby. His heart
was beating, his vital organs functioning; in every respect he
was a living organism. And yet he was not. He was a breathing,
pulsating corpse, a dead man in an oxygen tent, with
tubes and needles running into his body like antennae, feeding
him the vital fluids that were necessary to keep him alive.
His face was twisted in a horrifying rictus that made him look

as though he were grinning, his lips pulled up so that his gums
were exposed. / am afraid I can offer you no hope, the Russian
doctor had said.
That had been weeks ago. Now they were back home in
Bel-Air. Jill had immediately called in Dr. Kaplan, and he had
sent for specialists who had summoned more specialists, and
the answer always came out the same: a massive stroke that
had heavily damaged or destroyed the nerve centers, with very
little chance of reversing the damage that had already been
done.
There were nurses around the clock and a physiotherapist
to work with Toby, but they were empty gestures.
The object of all this attention was grotesque. Toby's
skin had turned yellow, and his hair was falling out in large
tufts. His paralyzed limbs were shriveled and stringy. On his
face was the hideous grin that he could not control. He was
monstrous to look at, a death's head.
But his eyes were alive. And how alive! They blazed
with the power and frustration of the mind trapped in that
useless shell. Whenever Jill walked into his room, Toby's
eyes would follow her hungrily, frantically, pleading. For what?

For her to make him walk again? Talk again? To turn him
into a man again?
She would stare down at him, silent, thinking: A part
of me is lying in that bed, suffering, trapped. They were
bound together. She would have given anything to have saved Toby, to have
saved herself. But she knew that there was no
way. Not this time.
The phones rang constantly, and it was a replay of all
those other phone calls, all those other offers of sympathy.
But there was one phone call that was different. David
Kenyon telephoned. "I just want you to know that whatever
I can do -- anything at all -- I'm waiting."
Jill thought of how he looked, tall and handsome and
strong, and she thought of the misshapen caricature of a man
in the next room. "Thank you, David. I appreciate it. There's
nothing. Not at the moment."
"We've got some fine doctors in Houston," he said. "Some
of the best in the world. I could fly them down to him."

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Jill could feel her throat tightening. Oh, how she wanted
to ask David to come to her, to take her away from this place!
But she could not. She was bound to Toby, and she knew that
she could never leave him.
Not while he was alive.

Dr. Kaplan had completed his examination of Toby. Jill
was waiting for him in the library. She turned to face him as
he walked through the door. He said, with a clumsy attempt
at humor, "Well, Jill, I have good news and I have bad news."
"Tell me the bad news first."
"I'm afraid Toby's nervous system is damaged too heavily
to be rehabilitated. There's no question about it. Not this
time. He'll never walk or talk again."
She stared at him a long time, and then said, "What's
the good news?"
Dr. Kaplan smiled. "Toby's heart is amazingly 'strong.
With proper care, he can live for another twenty years."
Jill looked at him, unbelievingly. Twenty yegrs. That
was the good news! She thought of herself saddled with the
horrible gargoyle upstairs, trapped in a nightmare from which
there was no escape. She could never divorce Toby. Not as
long as he. lived. Because no one would understand. She was
the heroine who had saved his life. Everyone would feel betrayed,
cheated, if she deserted him now. Even David Kenyon.
David telephoned every day now, and he kept talking
about her wonderful loyalty and her selflessness, and they were
both aware of the deep emotional current flowing between
them.
The unspoken phrase was, when Toby dies.

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Three nurses attended Toby around the dock in shifts.
They were crisp and capable and as impersonal as machines.
Jill was grateful for their presence, for she could not bear to
go near Toby. The sight of that hideous, grinning mask
repelled her. She found excuses to stay away from his room.
When she did force herself to go to him, Jill could sense a
change in him immediately. Even the nurses could feel it.
Toby lay motionless and impotent, frozen in his spastic cage.
Yet the moment Jill entered the room, a vitality began to
blaze from those bright blue eyes. Jill could read Toby's
thoughts as clearly as if he were speaking aloud. Don't let me
die. Help me. Help me!
Jill stood looking down at his ruined body and thought,
/ can't help you. You don't want to live like this. You want to
die.

The idea began to grow in Jill.
The newspapers were full of stories about terminally ill
husbands whose wives had released them from their pain.
Even some doctors admitted that they deliberately let certain
patients die. Euthanasia, it was called. Mercy killing. But Jill
knew that it could also be called murder, even though nothing
lived in Toby anymore but those damned eyes that would
not stop following her around.

In the weeks that followed, Jill never left the house.

Most of the time, she shut herself away in her bedroom. Her
headaches had returned, and she could find no relief.

Newspapers and magazines carried human-interest stories
about the paralyzed superstar and his devoted wife, who had
once nursed him back to health. All the periodicals speculated
about whether Jill would be able to repeat the miracle. But
she knew that there would be no more miracles. Toby would
never be well again.
Twenty years. Dr. Kaplan had said. And David was out
there waiting for her. She had to find a way to escape from
her prison.
It began on a dark, gloomy Sunday. It rained in the
morning and continued all day, drumming against the roof
and the windows of the house until Jill thought she would
go mad. She was in her bedroom, reading, trying to get the
vicious tattoo of the falling rain out of her mind, when the
night nurse walked in. Her name was Ingrid Jotmson. She
was starched and Nordic.
"The burner upstairs isn't working," Ingrid announced.
"Ill have to go down to the kitchen to prepare Mr. Temple's
dinner. Could you stay with him for a few minutes?"
Jill could sense the disapproval in the nurse's voice. She

thought it strange for a wife not to go near her husband's
sickbed. "I'll look after him," Jill said.
She put down her book and went down the hall to Toby's
bedroom. The moment Jill walked into the room, her nostrils
were assailed by the familiar stench of sickness. In an instant,
every fiber of her being was flooded with memories of those
long, dreadful months when she had fought to save Toby.
Toby's head was propped up on a large pillow. As he
watched Jill enter, his eyes suddenly came alive, flashing out
frantic messages. Where haoe you been? Why have you stayed
away from me? I need you. Help me! It was as though his
eyes had a voice. Jill looked down at the loathsome, twisted
body with the grinning death's mask and she felt nauseated.
You'll never get well, damn you! You've got to die! I want
you to die!
As Jill stared at Toby, she watched the expression in his

eyes change. They registered shock and disbelief and then
they began to fill with such hatred, such naked malevolence,
that Jill involuntarily took a step away from the bed. She
realized Aen what had happened. She had spoken her
thoughts aloud. ' »
She turned and fled from the room.

In the morning, the rain stopped. Toby's old wheelchair
had been brought up from the basement. The day nurse,
Frances Gordon, was wheeling Toby out in his chair to the
garden to get some sun. Jill listened to the sound of the wheelchair
moving down the hall toward the elevator. She waited a
few minutes, then she went downstairs. She was passing the
library when the phone rang. It was David, calling from
Washington.
"How are you today?" He sounded warm and caring.
She had never been so glad to hear his voice. "I'm fine,
David."
"I wish you were with me, darling."
"So do I. I love you so much. And I want you. I want
you to hold me in your arms again. Oh, David..."
Some instinct made Jill turn. Toby was in the hallway,
strapped in the wheelchair where the nurse had left him for
a moment. His blue eyes blazed at Jill with such loathing, such
malice that it was like a physical blow. His mind was speaking
to her through his eyes, screaming at her, I'm going to kill
you! Jill dropped the telephone in panic.
She ran out of the room and up the stairs, and she could
feel Toby's hatred pursuing her, like some violent, evil force.
She stayed in her bedroom all day, refusing food. She sat in a
chair, in a trancelike state, her mind going over an dover the
moment at the telephone. Toby knew. He knew. She could not
face him again.
Finally, night came. It was the middle of July, and the

air still held the heat of the day. Jffl opened her bedroom
windows wide to catch whatever faint breeze there might be.

In Toby's room. Nurse Gallagher was on duty. She tiptoed
in to take a look at her patient Nurse Gallagher wished

she could read his mind, then perhaps she might be able to
help the poor man. She tucked the covers around Toby. "You
get a good night's sleep now," she said, cheerily. "I'll be back
to check on you." There was no reaction. He did not even
move his eyes to look at her.
Perhaps ifs just as well I can't read his mind. Nurse
Gallagher thought. She took one last look at him and retired
to her little sitting room to watch some' late-night television.
Nurse Gallagher enjoyed the talk shows. She loved to watch
movie stars chat about themselves. It made them terribly
human, just like ordinary, everyday people. She kept the sound
low, so that it would not disturb her patient. But Toby Temple
would not have heard it in any case. His thoughts were
elsewhere.

The house was asleep, safe in the guarded fastness of the
Bel-Air woods. A few faint sounds of traffic drifted up from
Sunset Boulevard far below. Nurse Gallagher was watching a
late night movie. She wished they would run an old Toby
Temple film. It would be so exciting to watch Mr. Temple
on television and know that he was here in person, just a few
feet away. (
At four a.m.. Nurse Gallagher dozed off in the middle of
a horror film.'
In Toby's bedroom there was a deep silence.
In Jill's room, the only sound that could be heard was die
ticking of the bedside clock. Jill lay in her bed, naked, sound
asleep, one arm hugging a pillow, her body dark against the
white sheets. The street noises were muffled and far away.
Jill turned restlessly in her sleep and shivered. She
dreamed that she and David were in Alaska on their honeymoon.
They were on a vast frozen plain and a sudden storm
had come up. The wind was blowing the icy air into their
faces, and it was difficult to breathe. She turned toward David,
bat he was gone. She was alone in the frigid Arctic, coughing,
fighting to get her breath. It was the sound of someone choking
that woke Jill up. She heard a horrid, gasping wheeze, a death
rattle, and she opened her eyes, and the sound was coming from
her own throat. She could not breathe. An icy cloak of air

f covered her like some obscene blanket, caressing her nude
body, stroking her breasts, kissing her lips with a frigid, malodorous
breath that reeked of the grave. Jill's heart was pounding

wildly now, as she fought for air. Her lungs felt seared from the cold. She tried to sit up, and it was as though there was an invisible weight holding her down. She knew this had to be a dream, but at the same time she could hear that hideous rattle from her throat as she fought for breath. She was dying. But could a person die during a nightmare? Jill could feel the cold tendrils exploring her body, moving in between her legs, inside her now, filling her, and with a heart-stopping suddenness, she realized it was Toby. Somehow, by some means, it was Toby. And the quick rush of terror in Jill gave her the strength to daw her way to the foot of the bed, gasping for breath, mind and body fighting to stay alive. She reached the floor and struggled to her feet and ran for the door, feeling the cold pursuing her, surrounding her, clutching at her. Her fingers found the door knob and twisted it open. She ran out into the hallway, panting for air, filling her starved lungs with oxygen.

The hallway was warm, quiet, still. Jill stood there, swaying, her teeth chattering uncontrollably. She turned to look into her room. It was normal and peaceful. She had had a nightmare. Jill hesitated a moment, then slowly walked back through the doorway. Her room was warm. There was nothing to be afraid of. Of course, Toby could not harm her.

In her sitting room. Nurse Gallagher awakened and went in to check on her patient.

Toby Temple was lying in his bed, exactly as she had left him. His eyes were staring at the ceiling, focused on something that Nurse Gallagher could not see.

After that the nightmare kept recurring regularly, like a black omen of doom, a prescience of some horror to come. Slowly, a terror began to build up in Jill. Wherever she went in the house, she could feel Toby's presence. When the nurse took him out, Jill could hear him. Toby's wheelchair had developed a high-pitched creak, and it got on Jill's nerves every time she heard it. 7 tnust have it fixed, she thought. She

avoided going anywhere near Toby's room, but it did not matter. He was everywhere, waiting for her.

The headaches were constant now, a savage, rhythmic pounding that would not let her rest. Jill wished that the pain would stop for an hour, a minute, a second. She had to sleep.

She went into the maid's room behind the kitchen, as far away from Toby's quarters as she could get. The room was warm and quiet. Jill lay down on the bed and dosed her eyes. She was asleep almost instantly.

She was awakened by the fetid, icy air, filling the room, clutching at her, trying to entomb her. Jill leaped up and ran out the door.

The days were horrible enough, but the nights were

terrifying. They followed the same pattern. Jill would go to
her room and huddle in her bed, fighting to stay awake, afraid
ta go to sleep, knowing that Toby would come. But her exhausted
body would take over and she would finally doze off.
She would be awakened by the cold. She would lie shivering
in her bed, feeling the icy air creeping toward her, an evil
presence enveloping her like a terrible malediction. She would
get up and flee in silent terror.

It was three a.m.
Jill had fallen asleep in her chair, reading a book. She
came out of her sleep gradually, slowly, and she opened her
eyes in the pitch-black bedroom, knowing that something was
terribly wrong. Then she realized what it was. She had gone
to sleep with all the lights on. She felt her heart begin to race
and she thought. There's nothing to be afraid of. Nurse Gallagher
must have come in and turned out the lights.
Then she heard the sound. It was coming down the hallway, creak... creak...
Toby's wheelchair, moving toward
her bedroom door. Jill began to feel the hairs rise on the back
of her neck. It's only a tree branch against the roof, or the
house settling, she told herself. Yet she knew that it wasn't
true. She had heard mat sound too many times before. Creak
... creak... like the music of death coming to get her. /(
can't be Toby, she thought. He's infos bed, helpless. Pm losing

my mind. But she could hear it coming closer and closer. It
was at her door now. It had stopped, waiting. And suddenly
there was the sound of a crash, and then silence.
Jill spent the rest of the night huddled in her chair in the
dark, too terrified to move.
In the morning, outside her bedroom door, she found a
broken vase on the floor, where it had been knocked over from
a hallway table.

She was talking to Dr. Kaplan. "Do you believe that the
-- the mind can control the body?" Jill asked.
He looked at her, puzzled. "In what way ?"
"If Toby wanted --wanted very much to get out of his
bed, could he?"
"You mean unaided? In his present condition?" He gave
her a look of incredulity. "He has absolutely no mobility at
all. None whatsoever."
Jill was still not satisfied. "If--if he was really determined
to get up -- if there was something he felt he had to
do..."
Dr. Kaplan shook his head. "Our mind gives command!
to the body, but if your motor impulses are blocked, if there
are no muscles to carry out those commands, then nothing cm
happen."
She had to find out. "Do you believe that object! can be

moved by the mind?"
"You mean psychokinesis? There are a lot of experiments
being done, but no one has ever come up with any proof that's
convinced me." '
There was the broken vase outside her bedroom door.
Jill wanted to tell him about that, about the cold air that
kept following her, about Toby's wheelchair at her door, but
he would, fttek she was crazy. Was she? Was something wrong
with futr! Wvs she losing her mind?
When Dr. Kaplan left, Jill walked over to look at herself
in the mirror. She was shocked by what she saw. Her cheeks
were sunken and her eyes enormous in a pale, bony face. If I
go on this way, Jill thought, I'll die before Toby. She looked
at her stringy, dull hair and her broken, cracked fingernails.

/ must never let David see me looking like this. I have to
start taking care of myself. From now on, she told herself,
you're going to the beauty parlor once a week, and you're
going to eat three -meals a day and sleep eight hows.
The following morning, Jill made an appointment at the
beauty parlor. She was exhausted, and under the warm, comfortable
hum of the hair drier, she dozed off, and the nightmare
began. She was in bed, asleep. She could'hear Toby come into
her bedroom in his wheelchair... creak... creak. Slowly, he
got out of the chair and rose to his feet and moved toward her,
grinning, his skeletal hands reaching for her throat. Jill awoke
screaming wildly, throwing the beauty shop into an uproar. She
fled without even having her hair combed out.
After diat experience, Jill was afraid to leave the house
again.
And afraid to remain in it. ,,

Something seemed to be wrong with her head. It was
no longer just the headaches. She was beginning to forget
things. She would go downstairs for something and walk into
the kitchen and stand there, not knowing what she had come
for. Her memory began to play strange tricks on her. Once,
Nurse Gordon came in to speak to her; Jill wondered what a
nurse was doing Acre, and then she suddenly remembered.
The director was waiting on the set for Jill. She tried to recall
her line. Not very well, Fm afraid. Doctor. She must
speak to the director and find out how he wanted her to read
it. Nurse Gordon was holding her band, saying, "Mrs. Temple!
Mrs. Templel Are you feeling all right?" And Jill was back
in her own surroundings, again in the present, caught up in
the terror of what was happening to her. She knew she could
not go on like this. She had to find out whether there was
something wrong with her mind or whether Toby was able to
somehow move, whether he had found a way to attack her,
to try tomurder her.
She had to see him. She forced herself to walk down the

long hall toward Toby's bedroom. She stood outside a moment,
steeling herself, and then Jill entered Toby's room.
y * «,

Toby was lying in his bed, and the nurse was giving him
a sponge bath. She looked up, saw Jill and said, "Why, here's
Mrs. Temple. We're just having a nice bath, aren't we?"
Jill turned to look at the figure on the bed.
Toby's arms and legs had shriveled into stringy appendages
attached to his shrunken, twisted torso. Between his legs,
like some long. '.ndecent snake, lay his useless penis, flaccid
and ugly. The yellow cast had gone from Toby's face, but
the gaping idiot grin was still there. The body was dead, but
the eyes were frantically alive. Darting, seeking, weighing,
planning, hating; cunning blue eyes filled with their secret
plans, their deadly determination. It was Toby's mind she was
seeing. The important thing to remember is that his mind is
unimpaired, the doctor had told her. His mind could think
and feel and hate. That mind had nothing to do but plan its
revenge, figure put a way to destroy her. Toby wanted her
dead, as she wanted him dead.
As Jill looked down at him now, staring into those eyes
blazing with loathing, she could hear him saying, Fm going
to kilt you, and she could feel the waves of abhorrence hitting
her like physical blows.
Jill stared into those eyes, and she remembered the
broken vase and she knew that none of the nightmares had
been illusions. He had found a way.
She knew now that it was Toby's life against hers.

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When Dr. Kaplan finished his examination of Toby, he
went to find Jill. "I think you should stop the therapy in the
swimming pool," he said. "It's a waste of time. 1 was hoping
we might get some slight improvement in Toby's musculature,
but it's not working. I'll talk to the therapist myself."
"No!" It was a sharp ay.
Dr. Kaplan looked at her in surprise. "Jill, I fenow what
you did for Toby last time. But this time it's hopeless. I --"
"We can't give up. Not yet." There was a desperation
in her voice.
Dr. Kaplan hesitated, then shrugged. "Well, if it means
that much to you, but--"
"It does."
At that moment, it was the most important thing in the
world. It was going to save Jill's life.
She knew now what she had to do.

The following day was Friday. David telephoned Jill to
tell her that he had to go to Madrid on business.

"I may not be able to call over the weekend."
"I'll miss you," Jill said. "Very much."
"I'll miss you, too. Are you all right? You sound strange.
Are you tired?"
Jill was fighting to keep her eyes open, to forget the
terrible pain in her head. She could not remember the last
time she had eaten or slept. She was so weak that it was difficult to stand.
She forced energy into her voice. "I'm fine,
David."
"I love you, darling. Take care of yourself."
"I'm going to, David. I love you, please know that." No
matter what happens.
She heard the physiotherapist's car turn into the driveway,
and Jill started downstairs, her head pounding, her
trembling legs barely able to support her. She opened the
front door as the physiotherapist was about to ring the bell.
"Morning, Mrs. Temple," he said. He started to enter,
but Jill blocked his way. He looked at her in surprise.
"Dr. Kaplan has decided to discontinue Mr. Temple's
therapy treatments," Jill said.
The physiotherapist frowned. It meant he had made an
unnecessary trip out here. Someone should have told him
earlier. Ordinarily he would have complained about the way
it had been handled. But Mrs. Temple was such a great lady,
with such big problems. He smiled at her and said, "It's okay,
Mrs. Temple. I understand."
And he got back into his car.
Jill waited until she heard the car drive away. Then she
started back up the stairs. Halfway up, a wave of dizziness
hit her again, and she had to cling to the banister until it
passed. She could not stop now. If she did, she would be
dead.
She walked to the door of Toby's room, turned the knob
and entered. Nurse Gallagher was seated in an easy chair
working on needlepoint. She looked up in surprise as she
saw Jill standing in the doorway. "Well!" she said. "You've
come to visit us. Isn't that nice?" She turned toward the bed.
"I know Mr. Temple is pleased. Aren't we, Mr. Temple?"
Toby was sitting up in bed, propped upright by pillows,
his eyes carrying his message to Jill. I'm going to kill you.
Jill averted her eyes and walked over to Nurse Gallagher.
"I've decided that I haven't been spending enough time with
my husband."
"Well, now, that's exactly what I've been thinking,"
Nurse Gallagher chirped. "But then I could see that you've
been ill yourself, and so I said to myself --"

*Tm feeling much better now," JiB interrupted. "I'd
like to be alone with Mr. Temple."
Nurse Gallagher gathered up her needlepoint paraphernalia
and got to her feet. "Of course," she said. "I'm sure
we'll enjoy that." She turned toward the grinning figure on

the bed. "Won't we, Mr. Temple?" To Jill, she added, "I'M
just go down to the kitchen and fix myself a nice cup of
tea."
"No. You're off duty in half an hour. You can leave
now. I'll stay here until Nurse Gordon arrives." Jill gave
her a quick, reassuring smile. "Don't worry. I'll be here with
him."
"I suppose I could get some shopping done, and -- "
"Fine," Jill said. "You run along."
Jill stood there, immobile, until she heard the front door
slam and Nurse Gallagher's car going down the driveway.
When the sounds of the motor had died away on the summer
air, Jill turned to look at Toby.
His eyes were focused on her face in an unwavering,
unblinking stare. Forcing herself to move closer to the bed,
she pulled back the covers and looked down at the wasted,
paralyzed frame, the limp, useless legs.
The wheelchair was in a corner. Jill moved it over to
the bedside and positioned the chair so that she could roll
Toby onto it. She reached toward him, and stopped. It took
every ounce of her willpower to touch him. The grinning,
mummified face was only inches away from her, the mouth
smiling idiotically and the bright blue eyes spewing venom.
Jill leaned forward and forced herself to lift Toby by his arms.
He was almost weightless, but in Jill's exhausted condition,
she could barely manage it. As she touched his body, Jill could
feel the icy air begin to envelop her. The pressure inside her
head was becoming unbearable. There were bright colored
spots before her eyes, and they began to dance around, faster
and faster, making her dizzy. She felt herself starting to faint,
but she knew that she must not allow that to happen. Not if
she wanted to live. With a superhuman effort, she dragged
Toby's limp body onto the wheelchair and strapped him in.
She looked at her watch. She had only twenty minutes.

It took Jill five minutes to go into her bedroom and
change into a bathing suit and return to Toby's room.
She released the brake on the wheelchair and began to
wheel Toby down the corridor, into the elevator. She stood
behind him as they rode down, so that she could not see his
eyes; But she could feel them. And she could feel the damp
cold of the noxious air that began to fill the elevator, smothering
her, caressing her, filling her lungs with its putrescence
until she began to choke. She could not breathe. She fell to
her knees, gasping, fighting to stay conscious, trapped in there
with him. As she started to feel herself blacking out, the
elevator door opened. She crawled into the warm sunlight and
lay there on the ground, breathing deeply, sucking in the
fresh air, slowly getting back her energy. She turned toward
the elevator. Toby was seated in the wheelchair, watching,
waiting. Jill quickly pushed the chair out of the elevator. She

started toward the swimming pool. It was a beautiful, cloudless day, warm and balmy, the sun sparkling on the blue, filtered water.

Jill rolled the wheelchair to the edge of the deep end of the pool and set (he brake. She walked around to the front of the chair. Toby's eyes were fixed on her, watchful, puzzled. Jill reached for the strap holding Toby into the chair, and tightened it as hard as she could, pulling on it,--yanking it with all that was left of her strength,'feeling herself growing dizzy again with the effort. Suddenly if was done. Jill watched Toby's eyes change as he realized what was happening, and they began to fill with a wild, demonic panic.

Jill released the brake, grasped the handle of the wheelchair and started to push it toward the water. Toby was trying to move his paralyzed lips, trying to scream, but no sound came out, and the effect was terrifying. She could not bear to look into his eyes. She did not want to know.

She shoved the wheelchair to the very edge of the pool. And it stuck. It was held back by the cement lip. She pushed harder, but it would not go over. It was as though Toby were holding the chair back by sheer willpower. Jill could see him straining to rise out of the chair, fighting for his life. He was going to get loose, free himself, reach out for

her throat with his bony fingers ... She could hear his voice screaming, I don't want to die... I don't want to die, and she did not know whether it was her imagination or whether it was real, but in a rush of panic, she found a sudden strength and shoved as hard as she could against the back of the wheelchair. It lurched forward, upward into the air, and hung there, motionless, for what seemed an eternity, then rolled into the pool, hitting with a loud splash. The wheelchair seemed to float on top of the water for a long time, then slowly began to sink. The eddies of the water turned the chair around, so that the last thing Jill saw was Toby's eyes damning her to hell as the water dosed over them.

She stood there forever, shivering in the warm noonday sun, letting the strength flow back into her mind and body. When she was finally able to move again, she walked down the steps of the swimming pool to wet her bathing suit. Then she went into the house to telephone the police.

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Toby Temple's death made newspaper headlines all over the world. If Toby had become a f oft hero, then Jffl had become a heroine. Hundreds of thousands of words were printed about them, their photographs appeared in all the

media. Their great love story was told and retold, the tragic ending giving it an even greater poignancy. Letters and telegrams of condolence streamed in from heads of state, housewives, politicians, millionaires, secretaries. The world had suffered a personal loss; Toby had shared the gift of his laughter with his fans, and they would always be grateful. The air waves were filled with praise for him, and each network paid tribute to him.
There would never be another Toby Temple.
The inquest was held at the Criminal Court Building on Grand Avenue in downtown Los Angeles, in a small, compact courtroom. An inquest examiner was in charge of the hearings, guiding the panel of six jurors.
The room was packed to overflowing. When Jill arrived, the photographers and reporters and fans mobbed her. She was dressed in a simple black tailored wool suit. She wore no makeup and she had never looked more beautiful. In the few days that had elapsed since Toby's death, Jill had miraculously bloomed into her old self again. For the first time in months, she was able to sleep soundly and dreamlessly. She had a voracious appetite and her headaches had disappeared. The demon that had been draining her life away was gone.
Jill had talked to David every day. He had wanted to come to the inquest, but Jill insisted that he stay away. They would have enough time together later.
"The rest of our lives," David had told her.

There were six witnesses at the inquest. Nurse Gallagher, Nurse Gordon and Nurse Johnson testified about the general routine of their patient, and his condition. Nurse Gallagher was giving her testimony. - "What time were you supposed to go off duty on &e morning in question?" the inquest examiner asked.
"At ten."
"What time did you actually leave?"
Hesitation. "Nine-thirty."
"Was it your custom, Mrs. Gallagher, to leave your patient before your shift was up?"
"No, sir. That was the first time."
"Would you explain how you happened to leave early .on that particular day?"
"It was Mrs. Temple's suggestion. She wanted to be alone with her husband."
"Thank you. That's all."
Nurse Gallagher stepped down from the stand. Of course Toby Temple's death was an accident, she thought It's a pity that they had to put a wonderful woman like fill Temple through this ordeal. Nurse Gallagher looked over at Jill and felt a quick stab of guilt. She remembered the night that she had gone into Mrs. Temple's bedroom and found her asleep in a chair. Nurse Gallagher had quietly turned out the lights and closed the door so that Mrs. Temple would not be disturbed. In the dark hallway. Nurse Gallagher had brushed

against a vase on a pedestal and it had fallen and broken. She had meant to tell Mrs. Temple, but the vase had looked very expensive, and so, when Mrs. Temple had not mentioned it^ Nurse Gallagher decided to say nothing about it.

The physiotherapist was on &e witness stand.
"You usually gave Mr. Temple a treatment every day?"
"Yes, sir."
"Did this treatment take place in the swimming pool?"
"Yes, sir. The pool was heated to a hundred degrees, and--"
"Did you give Mr. Temple a treatment on the date in question?"
"No, sir."
"Would you tell us why?"
"She sent me away."
"By 'she', you mean Mrs. Temple?"
"Right."
"Did she give you any reason?"
"She said Dr. Kaplan didn't want him to have no more treatments."
"And so you left without seeing Mr. Temple?"
"That's correct. Yeah."

Dr. Kaplan was on the stand.
"Mrs. Temple telephoned you after the accident, Dr. Kaplan. Did you examine the deceased as soon as you arrived at the scene?"
"Yes. The police had pulled the body out of the swimming pool. It was still strapped into the wheelchair. The police surgeon and I examined the body and determined that it was too late for any attempt at resusdtation. Both lungs were filled with water. We could detect no vital signs."
"What did you do then. Dr. Kaplan?"
"I took care of Mrs. Temple. She was in a state of acute hysteria. I was very concerned about her."
"Dr. Kaplan, did you have a previous discussion with Mrs. Temple about discontinuing therapy treatments?"
"I did. I told her I thought they were a waste of time."
"What was Mrs. Temple's reaction to that?"
Dr. Kaplan looked over at Jill Temple and said, "Her reaction was very unusual. She insisted that we keep trying."
He hesitated. "Since I am under oath and since this inquest jury is interested in hearing the truth, I feel there is something I am obliged to say."
A complete hush had fallen over the room. Jill was staring at him. Dr. Kaplan turned toward the jury box.
"I would like to say, for the record, that Mrs. Temple is probably the finest and bravest woman I have ever had the honor to know." Every eye in the courtroom turned toward Jill. "The first time her husband suffered a stroke, none of us thought he had a chance of recovery. Well, she nursed him back to health single-handedly. She did for him

what no doctor I know could have done. I could never begin
to describe to you her devotion or dedication to her husband."
He looked over to where Jill was sitting and said, "She is an
inspiration to all of us."
The spectators broke out into applause.
"That will be all, Doctor," the inquest examiner said.
"I would like to call Mrs. Temple to the stand."
They watched as Jill rose and slowly walked over to the
witness stand to be sworn in. '
'I know what an ordeal this is for you, Mrs. Temple, and
I will try to get it over with as quickly as possible."
"Thank you." Her voice was low.
"When Dr. Kaplan said he wanted to discontinue the
therapy treatments, why did you want to go ahead with
them?"
She looked up at him and he could see the <^eep pain
in her eyes. "Because I wanted my husband to have every
chance to get well again. Toby loved life, and I wanted to
bring him back to it. I -- " Her voice faltered, but she went
on.. "I had to help him myself."
"On the day of your husband's death, the physiotherapist
came to the house, and you sent him away."
"Yes."
"Yet, earlier, Mrs. Temple, you said you wanted those
treatments to continue. Can you explain your action?"
"It's very simple. I felt that our love was the only thing
strong enough to heal Toby. It had healed him before..."
She broke off, unable to continue. Then, visibly steeling herself,
she continued in a harsh voice, "I had to let him know
how much I loved him, how much I wanted him to get well
again."
Everyone in the courtroom was leaning forward, straining
to hear every word.

"Would you tell us what happened on the morning of
the accident?"
There was a silence that lasted for a full minute while
Jill gathered her strength, and then she^ spoke. "I went into
Toby's room. He seemed so glad to see me. I told him that
I was going to take him to the pool myself, that I was going
to make him well again. I put on a bathing suit so that I
could work with him in the water. When I started to lift him
off the bed into his wheelchair, I -- I became faint. I suppose
I should have realized then that I wasn't physically strong
enough to do what I was trying to do. But I couldn't stop.
Not if it was going to help him. I put him in the wheelchair
and talked to him all the way down to the pool. I wheeled
him to the edge...."
She stopped, and there was a breathless hush in the
room. The only sound was the susurration of the reporters'
pens as they frantically scribbled on their shorthand pads.

"I reached down to undo the straps that held Toby in
the wheelchair, and I felt faint again and started to fall. I --
I must have accidentally released the brake. The chair started
to roll into the pool. I tried to grab it, but it--it went
into the pool with -- with Toby strapped into it." Her voice
was choked. "I jumped into the pool after him and fougnfto
free him, but the straps were too tight. I tried to lift the chair
out of the water, but it was -- it was too heavy. -It... was
... just... too... heavy." She closed her eyes a moment to
hide her deep anguish. Then, almost in a whisper, "I tried
to help Toby, and I killed him."
It took the inquest jury less than three minutes to reach
a verdict: Toby Temple had died in an accident.

Clifton Lawrence sat in the back of the courtroom and
listened to the verdict. He was certain that Jill had murdered
Toby. But there was no way to prove it. She had gotten away
with it.
The case was closed.

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The funeral was standing room only. It was held at
Forest Lawn on a sunny August morning, on the day Toby
Temple was to have started his new television series. There
were thousands of people milling about the lovely, rolling
grounds, trying to get a look at all the celebrities who were
there to pay their last respects. Television cameramen photographed
the funeral services in long shots and zoomed in for
close ups of the stars and producers and directors who were
at the graveside. The President of the "United States had sent
an emissary. There were governors present, studio heads,
presidents of' large corporations, and representatives from
every guild that Toby had belonged to: SAG and AFTRA
and ASCAP and AGVA. The president of the Beveriy Hills
branch of the Veterans of Foreign Wars was there in full
uniform. There were contingents from the local police and
fire departments.
And the little people were there. The grips and prop
men and extras and stunt men who had worked with Toby
Temple. The wardrobe mistresses and the best boys and the
go-fers and the gaffers and the assistant directors. And there
were others, and all of them had come to pay homage to a
great American. O'Hanlon and Rainger were there, remembering
the skinny little kid who had walked into their office
at Twentieth Century-Fox. I understand you fellas are going
to write some jokes for me.... He uses his hands like he's
chopping wood. Maybe we could write a woodchopper act
for him... . He pushes too hard. .. . Jesus, with that material

-- wouldn't you?... A comic opens funny doors. A comedian
opens doors funny. And Toby Temple had worked and learned
and gone to the top. He was a prick, Rainger was thinking.
But he was our prick.
Clifton Lawrence was there. The little agent had been
to the barber and his clothes were freshly pressed, but his
eyes gave him away. They were the eyes of a failure among
his peers. Clifton was lost in memories, too. He was remembering
that first preposterous phone call. There's a young
comic Sam Goldwyn wants you to see... and Toby's performance
at the school. You don't have to eat the entire jar
of cosier to know if it's good, right?... I've decided to take
you on as a client, Toby.... If you can put the beer drinkers
in your pocket, the champagne crowd will be a push-over.. ..
I can make you the biggest star in the business. Everyone
had wanted Toby Temple: the studios, the networks, the
nightclubs. You've got so many clients that sometimes I think
you don't pay enough attention to me.... It's like a group
fuck. Cliff. Somebody always gets left with a hard-on.... I
need your advice. Cliff.... It's this girl...
Clifton Lawrence had a lot to remember.
Next to Clifton stood Alice Tanner.
She was absorbed in the memory 'of Toby's first audition
in her office. Somewhere, hidden under all those movie stars,
is a young man with a lot of talent.... After seeing thbse
pros last night, I -- I don't think I have it. And falling in love
with him. Oh, Toby, I love you so much.... I love you, too,
Alice.... Then he was gone. But she was grateful that she
had once had him.
Al Caruso had come to pay tribute. He was stooped and
gray and his brown Santa Claus eyes were filled with tears. He
was remembering how wonderful Toby had been to Millie.
Sam Winters was there. He was thinking of all the
pleasure Toby Temple had given to millions of people and he
wondered how one measured that against the pain that Toby
had given to a few.
Someone nudged Sam and he turned to see a pretty,
dark-haired girl, about eighteen. "You don't know me, Mr.
Winters"--she smiled--"but I heard you're looking for a

girl for the new William Forbes movie. I'm from Ohio, and..."
David Kenyon was there, Jill had asked him not to come,
but David had insisted. He wanted to be near her. Jill supposed
that it could do no harm now. She was finished with her
performance.
The play had closed and her part was over. Jill was so
glad and so dred. It was as though the fiery ordeal she had
gone through had burned away the hard core of bitterness
within her, had cauterized all the hurts and the disappointments
and the hatreds. Jill Castle had died in the holocaust

and Josephine Czinski had been reborn in the ashes. She was
at peace again, filled with a love for everyone and a contentment
she had not known since she was a young girl. She had
never been so happy. She wanted to share it with the world.
The funeral rites were ending. Someone took Jill's arm,
and she allowed herself to be led to the limousine. When she
reached the car, David was standing there, a look of adoration
on his face. Jill smiled at him. David took her hands in his
and they exchanged a few words. A press photographer
snapped a picture of them.

Jill and David decided to wait five months before they
got married,, so that the public's sense of propriety would be
satisfied. David spent a great part of that time out of the
country, but they talked to each other every day. Four months
after Toby's funeral, David telephoned Jill and said, "I had a
brainstorm. Let's not wait any longer. I have to go to Europe
next week for a conference. Let's sail to France on the
Bretagne. The captain can marry us. We'll honeymoon in
Paris and from there we'll go anywhere you like for as long
as you like. What do you say?"
"Oh, yes, David, yes!"

She took a loag4ast look around the house, thinking of
all that had happened here. Remembering her first dinner
party there and all the wonderful parties later and then Toby's
sickness and her fight to bring him to health. And then...
there were too many memories.
She was glad to be leaving.

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David's private jet plane flew Jill to New York, where
a limousine was waiting to drive her to the Regency Hotel
on Park Avenue. The manager himself ushered Jill to an
enormous penAouse suite.
"The hotel is completely at your service, Mrs. Temple,"
he said. "Mr. Kenyon instructed us to see that you have
everything you need."
Ten minutes after Jill checked in, David telephoned-from
Texas. "Comfortable?" he asked.
"It's a little crowded." Jill laughed. "It has five bedrooms,
David. What am I going to do with them all?"
"If I were there, I'd show you," he said.
"Promises, promises," she teased. "When am I going to
,see you?"
"The Bretagne sails at noon tomorrow. I have some
business to wind up here. I'll meet you aboard the ship. I've
reserved the honeymoon suite. Happy, darling?"
"I've never been happier," Jill said. And it was true.
Everything that had gone before, all the pain and the agony,

it had all been worth it. It seemed remote and dim, now, like
a half-forgotten dream.
"A car will pick you up in the morning. The driver will
have your boat ticket."
"I'll be ready," Jill said.
Tomorrow.
It could have started with the photograph of Jill and
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David Kenyon that had been taken at Toby's funeral and
sold to a newspaper chain. It could have been a careless
remark dropped by an employee of the hotel where Jill was
staying or by a member of the crew of the Bretagne. In any
case, there was no way that the wedding plans of someone as
famous as Jill Temple could have been kept secret. The first
item about her impending marriage appeared in an Associated
Press bulletin. After that, it was a front-page story in newspapers
across the country and in Europe.
The story was also carried in the Hollywood Reporter
and Daily Variety.

The limousine arrived at the hotel precisely on the dot
of ten o'clock. A doorman and three bellboys loaded Jill's
luggage into the car. The morning traffic was light and the
drive to Pier 90 took less than half an hour.
A senior ship's officer was waiting for Jill at the gangplank.
"We're honored to have you aboard, Mrs. Temple,"
he said. "Everything's ready for you. If you would come this
way, please."
He escorted Jill to the Promenade Deck and ushered her
into a large, airy suite with its own private terrace. The rooms
were filled with fresh flowers.
"The captain asked me to give you his compliments. He
will see you at dinner this evening. He said to tell you how
much he's looking forward to performing the wedding- ceremony."
"Thank you," Jill said. "Do you know whether Mr.
Kenyon is on board yet?"
"We just received a telephone message. He's on his way
from the airport. His luggage is already here. If there is anything
you need, please let we know."
"Thank you," Jill replied. "There's nothing." And it
was true. There was not one single thing that she needed that
she did not have. She was the happiest person in the world.
There was a knock at the cabin `;/91' door and a steward
entered, carrying more flowers. Jill looked at the card. They
were from the President of the United States. Memories. She

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pushed them out of her mind and began to unpack.

He was standing at the railing on the Main Deck, studying
the passengers as Aey came aboard. Everyone was in a
festive mood, preparing for a holiday or joining loved ones

aboard. A few of them smiled at him, but the man paid no attention to them. He was watching the gangplank.

At eleven-forty a.m., twenty minutes before sailing time, a chauffeur-driven Silver Shadow raced up to Pier 90 and stopped. David Kenyon jumped out of the car, looked at his watch and said to the chauffeur, "Perfect timing. Otto."
"Thank you, sir. And may I wish you and Mrs. Kenyon a very happy honeymoon."
"Thanks," David Kenyon hurried toward the gangplank, where he presented his ticket. He was escorted, aboard by the ship's officer who had taken care of Jill.
"Mrs. Temple is in your cabin, Mr. Kenyon."
"Thank you."
David could visualize her in the bridal suite, waiting for him, and his heart quickened. As David started to move away, a voice called, "Mr. Kenyon ..."
David turned. The man who had been standing near the railing walked over to him, a smile on his face. David had never seen him before. David had the millionaire's instinctive distrust of friendly strangers. Almost invariably, they wanted something.
The man held out his hand, and David shook it cautiously.
"Do we know each other?" David asked.
"I'm an old friend of Jill's," the man said, and David relaxed. "My name is Lawrence. Clifton Lawrence."
"How do you do, Mr. Lawrence." He was impatient to leave.
"Jill asked me to come up and meet you," Clifton said.
"She's planned a little surprise for you."
David looked at him. "What kind of surprise?"
"Come along, and I'll show you."
David hesitated a moment. "All right. Will it take long?"

Clifton Lawrence looked up at him and smiled. "I don't think so."
They took an elevator down to C deck, moving past the throngs of embarking passengers and visitors. They walked down a corridor to a large set of double doors. Clifton opened them and ushered David in. David found himself in a large, ettpty theater. He looked around, puzzled. "In here?"
"In here." Clifton smiled.
He turned and looked up at the projectionist in the booth and nodded. The projectionist was greedy. Clifton had had to give him two hundred dollars before he would agree to assist him. "If they ever found out, I would lose my job," he had grumbled.
"No one will ever know," Clifton had assured him. "It's just a practical joke. All you have to do is lock the doors when I come in with my friend, and start running the film. We'll

be out of there in ten minutes."
In the end, the projectionist had agreed.
Now David was looking at Clifton, puzzled. "Movies?"
David asked.
"Just sit down, Mr. Kenyon."
David took a seat on the aisle, his long legs stretched
out. Clifton took a seat across from him. He was watching
David's face as the lights went down and the bright images
started to flicker on the large screen.

It felt as though someone was pounding him in the solar
plexus with iron hammers. David stared up at the obscene
images on the screen and his brain refused to accept what his
eyes were seeing. Jill, a young Jill, the way she had looked
when he had first fallen in love with her, was naked on a bed.
He could see every feature clearly. He watched, mute with
disbelief, as a man got astride the girl on the screen and
rammed his penis into her mouth. She began sucking it lovingly,
caressingly, and another girl came into the scene and
spread Jill's legs apart and put her tongue deep inside her.
David thought he was going to be sick. For one wild, hopeful
instant, he thought that this might be trick photography, a fake,
but the camera covered every movement that Jill made. Then

the Mexican came into the scene and got on top of Jill, and a
hazy red curtain descended in front of David's eyes. He was
fifteen years old again, and it was his sister Beth he was watching
up there, his sister sitting on top of the naked Mexican
gardener in her bed, saying, Oh, God, I love you, fuan. Keep
fucking me. Don't stop! and David standing in the doorway,
unbelievingly, watching his beloved sister. He had been seized
with a blind, overpowering rage, and had snatched lip a steel
letter opener from the desk and had run over to the bed and
knocked his sister aside and plunged the opener into the
gardener's chest, again and again, until the walls were covered
with blood, and Beth was screaming. Oh, God, no! Stop it,
David! I love him. We're going to be married! There was blood
everywhere. David's mother had come 'running into the room
and had sent David away. But he learned later that his mother
had telephoned the district attorney, a close friend of the
Kenyon family. They had had a long talk in the study, and the
Mexican's body had been taken to the jail. The next morning,
it was announced that he had committed suicide in his cell.
Three weeks later, Beth had been placed in an institution for
the insane. , '
It all flooded back into David now, the unbearable guilt
for what he had done, and he went berserk. He picked up
the man sitting across from him and smashed his fist into his
face, pounding at him, screaming meaningless, senseless words,
attacking him for Betfa and for Jill, and for his own shame.
Clifton Lawrence tried to defend himself, but there was no

way that he could stop the blows. A fist smashed into his nose and he felt something break. A fist cannoned into his mouth and the blood started running like a river. He stood there helplessly, waiting for the next blow to strike him. But suddenly there were no more. There was no sound in the room but his tortured, stertorous breathing and the sensuous sounds coming from the screen.

Clifton pulled out a handkerchief to try to stem the bleeding. He stumbled out of the theater, covering his nose and mouth with his handkerchief, and started toward JilTs cabin. As he passed the dining room, the swinging kitchen door opened for a moment, and he walked into the kitchen,

past the bustling chefs and stewards and waiters. He found an ice-making machine and scooped up chunks of ice into a cloth and put them over his nose and mouth. He started out. In front of h"n was an enormous wedding cake with little spun-sugar figures of the bride and groom on top. Clifton reached out and twisted off the bride's head and crushed it in his fingers.

Then he went to find Jill.

The ship was under way. Jill could feel the movement as the fifty-five-thousand-ton liner began to slide away from the pier. She wondered what was keeping David.

As Jill was finishing her unpacking, there was a knock at the cabin door. Jill hurried over to the door and called out, "David!" She opened it, her arms outstretched.

Clifton Lawrence stood there, his face battered,and bloody. Jill dropped her arms and stared at him. "What are you doing here? What--what happened to you?"

"I just dropped by to say hello, Jill."

She could hardly understand him.

"And to give you a message from David."

Jill looked at him, uncomprehendingly. "From Daddy

Clifton walked into the cabin.

He was making Jill nervous. "Where is David?"

Clifton turned to her and said, "Remember what movies used to be like in the old days? There were the good guys in the white hats and the bad guys in the black hats and in the end you always knew the bad guys were going to get their just deserts. I grew up on those movies, Jill. I grew up believing that life was really like that, that the boys in the white hats always won."

"I don't know what you're talking about." ,

"It's nice to know that once in a while life works out Kke those old movies." He smiled at her through battered bleeding lips and said, "David's gone. For good."

She stared at him in disbelief.

And at that moment, they both felt the motion of the ship come to a stop; Clifton walked out to the veranda and

looked down over the side of the ship. "Come here."

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Jill hesitated a moment, then followed him, filled with some nameless, growing dread. She peered over the railing. Far below on the water, she could see David getting on tile pilot tug, .leaving the Bretagne. She clutched the railing for support. "Why?" she demanded unbelievingly. "What happened?"
Clifton Lawrence turned to her and said, "I ran your picture for him."
And she instantly knew what he meant and she moaned, "Oh, my God. No! Please, no! You've killed.mel"
"Then we're even."
"Get out!" she screamed. "Get out of here!" She flung herself at him and her nails caught his cheeks and ripped deep gashes down the side. Clifton swung and hit her hard across the face. She fell to her knees, clutching her head in agony.
Clifton stood looking at her for a long moment. This was how he wanted to remember her. "So long, Josephine Czinski," he said.
Clifton left Jill's cabin and walked up to the boat deck, keeping the lower half of his face covered with the handkerchief. He walked slowly, studying the faces of the passengers, looking for a fresh face, an unusual type. You never knew when you might stumble across new talent. He felt ready to go back to work again.
Who could tell? Maybe he would get lucky and discover another Toby Temple.

Shortly after Clifton left, Claude Dessard walked up to Jill's cabin and knocked at the door. There was no response, but the chief purser could hear sounds inside the room. He waited a moment, then raised his voice and said, "Mrs. Temple, this is Claude Dessard, the chief purser. I was wondering if I might be of service?" ,
There was no answer. By now Dessard's internal warning system was screaming. His instincts told him that there was something terribly wrong, and he had a premonition that it centered, somehow, around this woman. A series of wild, outrageous thoughts danced through his brain. She had been

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urdered or kidnapped or -- He tried the handle of the door. was unlocked. Slowly, Dessard pushed die door open, Jill anple was standing at the far end of the cabin, looking out e porthole, her back to him. Dessard opened his mouth to eak, but something in the frozen rigidity of the figure stopped m. He stood there awkwardly for a moment, debating icther to quietly withdraw, when suddenly the cabin was led with an unearthly, keening sound, like an animal in pain.

elpless before such a deep private agony, Dessard withdrew, refully closing the door behind him.
Dessard stood outside the cabin a moment, listening to e Wordless cry from within, then, deeply disturbed, turned id headed for the theater on the main deck.

At dinner that evening, there were two empty seats at e captain's table. Halfway through the meal, the captain yialed to Dessard, who was hosting a party of less important ssengers two tables away. Dessard excused himself and irried over to the captain's table.
"Ah, Dessard," the captain said, genially. He lowered his ice and his tone changed. "What happened with Mrs. anple and Mr. Kenyon?"
Dessard looked around at the other guests and whispered, }s you know, Mr. Kenyon left with the pilot at the Ambrose ghtship. Mrs. Temple is in her cabin."
The captain swore under his breath. He was a methodical an who did not like to have his routine interfered with. ^terde! All the wedding arrangements have been made," !said.
"I know, Captain." Dessard shrugged and rolled his eyes ward. "Americans," he said.

Jill sat alone in the darkened cabin, huddled in a chair, r knees pulled up to her chest, staring into nothingness. ie was .gaeving, but it was not for David Kenyon or Toby anple of^ssea for herself. She was grieving for a little girl med Josephine CzinsH. Jill had wanted to do so much for at little girl, and now all the wonderful magical dreams she d had for her were finished.

Jill sat there, unseeing, numbed by a defeat that was beyond comprehension. Only a few hours ago she had owned the world, she had everything she ever wanted, and now she had nothing. She became slowly aware that her headache had returned. She had not noticed it before because of the o&er pain, the agonizing pain that was tearing deep into her bowels. But now she could feel the band around her forehead tightening. She pulled her knees up closer against her chest, in the fetal position, trying to shut out everything. She was so tired, so terribly tired. All she wanted to do was to sit here forever and not have to think. Then maybe the pain would stop, at least for a little while.
Jill dragged herself over to the bed and lay down and closed her eyes.
"Hen she felt it. A wave of cold, foul-smelling air moving toward her, surrounding her, caressing her. And she heard his voice, calling her name. Yes, she thought, yes. Slowly, almost in a trance, Jill got to her feet and walked out of her cabin, following the beckoning voice in her head.

If was two o'clock in the morning and the decks were
deserted when Jill emerged from her cabin. She stared down
at the sea, watching the gentle splashing of the waves against
the ship as it cut through the water, listening to the voice.
Jill's headache was worse now, a tight vise of agony. But the
voice was telling her not to worry, telling her that, everything
was going to be fine. Look down, the voice said.
Jill looked down into the water and saw something floating
there. It was a face. Toby's face, smiling at her, the
drowned blue eyes looking up at her. The icy breeze began
to blow, gently pushing her closer to the rail.
"I had to do it, Toby," she whispered. "You see that,
don't you?"
The head in the water was nodding, bobbing, inviting her
to come and join it. The wind grew colder and Jill's body
began trembling. Don't be afraid, the voice told her. The water
is deep and warm.... You'll be here with me.... Forever.
Come, Jill.
She closed her eyes a moment, but when she opened

than, .the smiling face was still there, keeping pace with the
ship, the mutilated limbs dangling in the water. Come to me,
the voice said.
She leaned over to explain to Toby, so that he would
leave her in peace, and the icy wind pushed against her, and
suddenly she was floating in the soft velvet night air, pirouetting
inspace. Toby's face was coming closer, coming to meet
her, and she felt the paralyzed arms go around her body, holding
her. And they were together, forever and ever.
Then there was only the soft night wind and the timeless
sea.
And the stars above, where it had all been written.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my appreciation for their generous
assistance to the following motion picture and television
producers:
Seymour Bems
Larry Gdbart
Bert Granet
Harvey Orldn
Matty Racldn
David Swift
Robert Weitman

And my deep gratitude for sharing with me their memories
and experiences goes to:

Marty Alien
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